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THE SITUATION.

BY REV. JAMES W. THOMPSON, D.D.

It is the purpose of this article to look into the present situation of our American Unitarian Church. The writer will try to see things as they are, and to tell what he sees honestly and dispassionately. It is a good time for such survey. Nothing ruffles us much just now. National Conferences are away back in the distance, and their plausible inconsistencies are well-nigh forgotten. A generous, hearty feeling is abroad, — a good degree of brotherly love all round. The zeal that knows something is on tiptoe. A vast pent-up enthusiasm for the highest weal of man, and for serving him according to the law and pattern of Christ, waits only for guidance and adequate opportunity. The deep currents of thought in all churches except the Catholic — possibly also in that — are setting in the direction of the widest fellowship *on the basis of primitive Christianity*. So I say it is a good time for looking over our field.

NUMERICAL.

According to the "Year Book" for 1870, there are, as I count, three hundred and twenty-three Unitarian parishes in

the country. Of these, two hundred and forty-three are supplied with ministers, which is an unusually large percentage, and approximates pretty nearly, it is probable, to the number of self-sustaining parishes. Of the three hundred and twenty-three parishes, sixty-eight are west of the Hudson, and about forty of these have been formed within the last ten years, — a reasonably large increase. Two hundred and forty-three ministers distributed over the country, well-instructed, earnest, faithful men, supplied with the good seed of the kingdom and sowing it broadcast, cannot fail of doing an immense work "in the regeneration." It is a force which no other branch of the church can despise but at its peril.

But here an abatement must be made. The force is not a unit; it is divided against itself. Of the two hundred and forty-three ministers, about forty, as I reckon, are Free Religionists, and, say fifty more, give to the Free Religion movement the benefit of their sympathy and good will; although the greater part of them, if a separation were forced, would be constrained by their convictions to remain with the Unitarian Church. This makes, it is apparent, a considerable deduction from the aggregate strength of the denomination; divides its counsels; enervates its action. Nevertheless, if we may fairly count twenty-five of the fifty partial allies of Free Religion as held to the faith of the Unitarian Church, we then have one hundred and seventy-eight ministers standing squarely on the Christianity of the New Testament, and consecrated to the work of unfolding and applying it. Again I say, this is a force which no "Evangelicism" can afford to despise or to rule out of the Master's vineyard, and which is sure to make itself felt in the time speedily coming beyond any present calculation or visible promise.

THE COLLECTION AND THE ISSUES.

The American Unitarian Association has just completed its collection for 1869-70. The result to its treasury is, on the whole, satisfactory. It shows that the love of truth, in which the Unitarian Church had its birth, is not extinct. It also certifies to a general satisfaction with the management of

the affairs of the Association, notwithstanding the strong dissent known to exist from certain details of its policy. The sum of the testimony from the collection may be taken to be, that a good year's work has been done by the American Unitarian Association in the interests of Christian truth and the righteousness which is of God.

It is a fact here to be noted in such a way as that a wrong interpretation be not put upon it, that the collection was not so much affected by the grave issues within the old lines of the Unitarian Church as many feared it might be. By tacit understanding these issues were postponed, and the collection therefore went forward with much of that animation and heartiness which denotes consent of thought and purpose. But it would be a blunder to infer from this that Unitarians have become indifferent to those issues, — issues which, of a truth, embrace all that is highest in human thought and most kindling and persuasive in spiritual hopes, — issues which, in their practical decision, involve the very existence of the Christian church. Indifference here is simply impossible. The question of the sources of religious truth and its authentication to the understanding and heart, the question of the adequacy of historical testimony as proof of alleged superhuman facts; the question whether Jesus Christ is the Central Light in the firmament of religious thought and aspiration, destined to shine forever, or only a brilliant but passing meteor; whether the name into which the universal church has been baptized is written with indelible ink by the finger of God on the scroll of the ages, or only in pencil in the memoranda of human history for temporary use, to be rubbed out at length and be no more legible; whether, in short, the faith of all the advanced races of man, standing now on the foundation of Jesus Christ as he is known historically through the books of the New Testament, and spiritually through that inward "working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself," needs to be reconstructed on the original elements and insights of human nature with such materials as can be supplied by matter, science, history (excluding the supernatural as essentially incredible), and consciousness, — these questions, or

rather this question, — for in reality they are but one, — cannot be regarded with indifference, nor otherwise than with intense interest ; and the discussion of it, though adjourned for special cause, is only adjourned. Every thinking mind must and will find an answer for itself. It cannot be slurred over as a trifle nor forced back as an obsolete debate. All things conspire to give it urgency. The tendency of modern thought to get at the root of things ; the curious and eager listening of the multitude whenever a new voice is heard in street or wilderness, in hall or temple, claiming to speak in the name of Truth, and "to show the things that are to come ;" the dreary statistics of that form of unbelief which scouts the idea of a personal God and a crucified Lord, which contemns all worship as a pestilent superstition, which counts the doctrine of the immortal life a lie, and the hope of that life a priest-imposed cheat — these, and a hundred other things, press upon the thoughtful that question of questions, whether we have a revelation from heaven authentic and authoritative, a veritable word of God spoken in the speech, writ in the life, active in the ever-abiding spirit of the Son of man, or whether, on the contrary, the belief of all the Christian ages that there is such a revelation has been but a miserable delusion. It would seem that within the Christian church there could not be two sides to this question ; yet it is well known that there are even in our own communion. And there are those who persuade themselves, and try to convince others, that the question, after all, is not important. Ye blind guides, anoint your eyes with eye-salve that ye may see !

Yet who is saint enough in his own esteem to impute moral blame to a man for being on one side rather than the other ? He is there, let it be freely conceded, because, constituted as he is, educated as he has been, looking up and down and around from his point of observation, he cannot help it. Character has nothing to do with it. Heaven and hell are not in the case. If they were, this anecdote might be in point : That amiable wit, Pipon of Taunton, when the Unitarian controversy first broke out vehemently in Boston and vicinity, and it was the custom of orthodox

pulpits remorselessly to consign their heretical brethren to "the devil and his angels," said naively, "I had rather go to hell with Kirkland, than to heaven with Morse [of Charlestown], *because he is such good company!*" There are many amongst us who would say, "I had rather go to hell with Emerson or Abbot, than to heaven with any who would shut them out; *because theirs is the better spirit!*" I will love my friend no less because he takes the opposite side to me on any question, however radical its cut. Truth sometimes must alienate; but that is not its best effect. The quality of that faith is not the finest which corrodes the links of a sweet friendship. I will put my heart into my hand when this is extended to my brother of the school of Free Religion, as freely as though he were on my side of the question; but I will say to him when he is going to vent his skepticism of the primitive Christianity in discourse, "God be merciful to you and cause, that your words be as water spilt on the ground!" and I will vote against him wherever the question that divides us comes up. Now this feeling I put in, not as mine individually, but as part of the situation. It characterizes the body,—a kind fraternal feeling towards those at opposite poles of opinion. And this, which is really a noble distinction, is, also, one of the embarrassments of the situation.

But the great question just stated is undeniably up in our communion; and it is the gravest part of the situation. Here and there it is creating serious disturbance. Occasionally it has broken up a society,—some after having been recipients of the care and nurture of the American Unitarian Association. When people set out to have a church, they commonly mean that it shall stand to Christ in the relation of branch to vine, that it shall bear the Christian name and do the Christian work; and when they find that it is getting to be something else, that the minister they have settled treats the New Testament as, in the main, a collection of myths and incredible fables, refuses to recognize the Christian ordinances, studiously omits the name of Jesus in his prayers, and seldom mentions it in his sermons, they conclude that it is best to

give it up. So the minister goes his way to farm or merchandise or lecture-room or editorial chair, and the church goes to sleep. Meanwhile, the question of questions goes on plowing its boundary-furrow, and ministers and people range themselves, first in inclination and sympathy, and then in open act, on one side or the other. Now it is necessary that this should be well understood everywhere, not only in order that the actual situation may be seen, — which it is the height of folly to conceal, — but that each church may know its own place, and each person may take his position advisedly.

OUR LITERATURE.

This question affects our denominational literature, which is also a part of the situation, and as significant, perhaps, as any other. It ought to represent the thought, the learning, the faith, the active life, as, also, the reverential and devotional spirit, of the body. Probably it does this in a good degree. It certainly is a rich and copious literature; and the work it is doing, nay, has already done, so silently as scarcely to be perceived, and yet so searchingly as to have reached the heart of every church in America, infiltrating its ideas through the sand and gravel of old theologies into active minds, covered but not stifled by them, is one of the most wonderful things in our history. But there is a danger in this matter of our literature. The temptation to forage novelties of speculation from fields not our own is hard to resist, especially when the tempter comes in shapely form and beautiful guise, — wit, poet, scholar, — and with a good letter of introduction. We are so set on being catholic, that we are in peril of losing identity. Now let us understand that the most catholic literature in the sphere of religion is not that which is most largely inclusive of the various thinking of this time, orthodox and heterodox, but that which, having a well-defined scope of its own, is most fair and just in dealing with all beliefs and opinions and products of thought not embraced within that scope. What, then, is the scope of our denominational literature? Is it not sufficiently defined by the two words, — *Unitarian Christianity*? It is to give wings to Unitarian Chris-

tianity. Whatever it introduces to popular thought, and diffuses for the kingdom of heaven's sake, must breathe the life, must wear the hue, must have the fresh and unmistakable savor of Unitarian Christianity. And of these two words is there a debatable question which is emphatic, the adjective or the noun? Indeed, for ourselves alone, is not the noun enough? For to us, is not Unitarian Christianity simply *Christianity* as it comes from the lips of Jesus and his apostles? Theism, or natural religion, is not Unitarian Christianity, and does not fall within the scope of our denominational literature as a distinct form of thought; and the organs of that literature would scarcely be acquit of breach of trust if they should give to it "aid and comfort." But how is it with the writings of Theodore Parker, it may be asked,—do they come within this scope? The question is pertinent as belonging to the situation, because there are not a few, ministers and laymen, who are bent upon having an edition of his works, or of a portion of them, published by the American Unitarian Association. They are sure it would "take" better than anything we now have. They hear a great cry for it. They think it would do much good. They believe that the West, especially, would hail it with boundless enthusiasm. This was said in substance at the late Western Conference. But surely Unitarian Christianity had no more unsparing assailant than this same author. Almost as soon as he became the Theodore Parker of religious literature, he disowned and repudiated it. It was his pungent hostility which gave to him his earliest celebrity. Full of learning, beauty, lofty sentiment, large discourse of morality and religion and the sweetest piety, as are some of his writings, brave and noble as was his life, wide and enduring as is his fame, still is it right for the Unitarian Church to claim him? Did it do so while he lived? When his name is called in the roll of its distinguished builders and saints, with its Wares and Channings and Nortons and Peabodys, and so many more, there are those to whom this looks like borrowing the use of a signature in order to obtain a discount. Is he not the prophet, the inheritance, the best part of the capital, of the

new school of Free Religion? Why rob it of so much of its wealth? If alive to-day, he would surely be of that denomination, and it would be no more than a natural expectation that his own communion would give circulation to his books. But the idea of asking Unitarians to do it would strike his keen sense of the ludicrous as irresistibly comical. Is it an indeterminate, characterless literature that the Unitarian Church wants? Because it is liberal, must it therefore be presumed omnivorous? Because it is not, in the popular sense, "evangelical," is it to be inferred that it will be satisfied with the minimum of Christianity? To promulgate Free Religion and Unitarian Christianity through the same denominational medium is as if a political party formed to promote a high tariff should send out its issues loaded with the ablest papers it could command in favor of free trade. There has been too much of this sort of thing. It is painful to see such waste of force in trying to keep things together that were meant to go apart; so much neutralizing of the elements of a splendid efficiency. Let us have done with these irritating mixtures. Nobody is satisfied with them. The churches are sick of them. The organs that furnish them get curses from all sides. One belabors their conservatism, another their radicalism, and all their inconsistency. This *pot pourri* of all beliefs and unbeliefs is not relished: it is known only as unwholesome diet which the blood refuses to assimilate. Yet a Saturday seldom goes by without bringing the dish to our tables, sometimes served in one tureen, and sometimes in two. It is as regular as fish for Friday. In the later years of the glorious old "Christian Examiner," we saw a painful example of this. It was melancholy to behold that venerable form, once so vigorous and agile, panting and staggering under the cruel load of contradictions which it was forced to carry, with so few of its former friends coming to its help. "The 'Christian Examiner,'" pathetically lamented, last May, our brave seer of New York, who did his utmost to avert the doom, "the 'Christian Examiner' is dying of neglect!" Alas, it is now no more! Its demise — may its spirit prove to have been *translated* where it will both find rest, and see as it used to be

seen! — its demise, *under the circumstances*, is one of the most auspicious signs at this moment, for Unitarian Christianity. It shows that the *old* faith of the "Examiner" is neither dead nor sleeping; and that the Unitarian communion intend to stand by that and cherish it with all the reverence and affection of their hearts. A new candidate for the favor and support of the Unitarian Church and "the rest of mankind" succeeds to the "Examiner's subscribers' list and good will. The first number — the only one at the time of this writing — is a good promise. The name of its accomplished editor is ample guaranty against dullness, as it is also against extreme opinions in theology. Great things are in his power. A wide expectancy greets him. Without our communion, a multitude of ears are attent when he speaks, and within it thousands are ready to be amused by his genius, instructed by his learning, cheered by his enterprising benevolence, and defended against the adversaries of their faith by his glittering sword.

OUR MISTAKE.

In thus alluding to the "Christian Examiner," the one great mistake of our church has been hinted at, — *its steady concessions to the critical and rationalizing temper of the day*. It has been forever parading "the latest results of criticism," when in truth but very few of these so-called "results" are accepted by the majority of those most competent to pass upon the questions. Not many things of much importance in the range of sacred criticism can be regarded as finally settled. Old questions are forever re-opening, and the conclusions of one school are disputed by another. To a great extent sacred criticism is simply conjectural, and its result therefore at best but a probability. It being the function of criticism to eliminate error, its task is mainly one of denial and rejection. Wishing to see the absolute truth, it does not hesitate to strip off the holy garments in which it has pleased God to clothe and protect her eternal beauty. Thus, in order to get at the truth in Christianity, it proceeds to tear away the wondrous facts, — the very form in which its life was manifested and its authority secured. But, in doing this, it severs

the head, chops off the hands and feet, and leaves only a breathless, silent, motionless torso. Honest, earnest, reverent criticism there must be. It has its noble work. Let it clear the text and hand over the original word illustrated by all the learning of which it is master. But when it ventures to pluck that word up and cast it away to the rubbish, when it would eliminate Jesus Christ himself as an Error, and put him back into his grave-clothes, it is high time for the church in every branch to say to it, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offense unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

Under the influence of the critical and rationalizing spirit there has grown up amongst us a good deal of free thinking, *i. e.*, of thinking against the claims of the Christianity of the New Testament; and a gospel of accommodation — like that which brought the first corruptions into the church — has been proclaimed instead of the old gospel of conversion. It has been said in substance, "No matter what you do with the word, the tradition, the name of Christ: if in his spirit you will help us feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and do good generally, we will not oppose your efforts to convert men to your way of thinking; you may have our pulpits, our press, our denominational prestige, our missionary field, our money, and we will ask no questions about your faith in Christ because, as you protest, that would be to set up a creed!" But this is in the teeth of Apostolic precedent. When did John preach a gospel of accommodation? When did Peter or Paul go into a city — Antioch, Athens, Corinth, Rome — and propose to its inhabitants — orators, priests, philosophers, the common people — to come into the New Kingdom bringing their philosophies, idolatries, and superstitions all with them. An eminent clergyman, speaking of a young graduate of the Divinity School, said, "He does n't believe in much of anything, — in Christianity, in personal immortality or a Personal God, — but he is a pure-minded man, of good talents, and I think somewhere *in the West* may find a place where he will do good!" It is to be hoped that he may do good wherever he goes. But in the name of truth let not such a teacher be

registered in your "Year Book" as a Unitarian minister, nor his teaching accepted as that of Unitarian Christianity. True liberality, in any sense of the word which makes it a virtue, is not that easy good-nature which is equally hospitable to truth and error, to faith and the negation of faith. Such hospitality cannot co-exist with intensity of conviction, and, instead of indicating advanced thought, as is its boast, is evidence of a backward movement towards that amiable Pyrrhonism which holds nothing as settled but its own tranquillity, or that Roman politeness which assigns a niche or a pedestal to any god whom any people may wish to set up in its Pantheon. No church can act with vigor, can make itself a vital force striking into the heart of society, that is not in a certain sense narrow. A church is efficient in proportion as it is centralized and shows a clean-cut distinctness of conviction and purpose. Christianity as dispensed by Jesus and the apostles was eminently of this character. It was a kingdom as distinct from every other as Judaism itself, open to Jew and Gentile alike only upon the acceptance of its corner-stone truth. The Unitarian Church has stood from the beginning clearly within the limits of the Christianity of the New Testament, although many worthy members of it have overleaped them. As a church it has never professed nor aimed to occupy a broader field ; and there it stands to-day.

RELATION TO SCIENCE.

The critical and rationalizing spirit thinks it finds justification of its dealing with Christianity in the methods of science. Now science seeks to ascertain facts and their law. It proceeds on the presumption that every fact is yoked to law. Any alleged fact that cannot be relegated to law it skips, and goes on its way patiently investigating within its own province, — from the known reaching forth to the unknown. But science has at no time pronounced against the *reality* of such facts as Christianity testifies to. It simply passes over them as not knowing yet what to do with them. When it is said that science *rejects* the miraculous, whom has she authorized to speak for her? She has not spoken herself to this effect.

The scientists of this age have held no œcumenical council, and, after learned debate, promulgated their decree. When they have done this, it will be time enough for Christianity to fling its crown to the dust and hide its diminished head. Science is supreme. Her decisions, when they are final to herself, are final to all the world. If they contradict tradition, scripture, theology, these must adjust themselves to her, not she to them. Vain is the struggle of faith against any truth which science demonstrates. She is God's interpreter to man of his universal scripture. Science, I say; *but not this or that professor or school of science*. The voices through which she speaks must have one accent, one clear and certain sound, in order that her word may be entitled to this homage.

The doctrine which science teaches of the interjection of new objects amongst former creations from time to time in the past millenniums — in other words, the doctrine of forms of life coming into existence without known relation to pre-existent forms as causes — corroborates the miraculous in Christianity. It opens a door into the school-room of science wide enough for Christ to come in with all his miraculous train. When that door is shut, and it is proved that no such thing as the creation of new forms has ever occurred, it may be necessary to seek a new explanation of the miracles of Christ. But as the case now stands, the critical and rationalizing spirit borrows no support from science in its rejection from religion of all facts not traceable to any known law of causation in the physical world.

From this glance at the present condition of our American Unitarian Church, it is natural to turn an inquiring eye to

ITS FUTURE.

But, in an age like this, it is not easy for any church to forecast its future. Where thought is free, its currents swift, and nothing stationary, ecclesiastical changes may be going on so silently as to be imperceptible to those who are changing with them; and as different churches are moving on converging lines, the distance across from one to another becomes every day shorter. It was only a little way for Bishop Huntington

from the Higher Unitarianism to the episcopate, and it was found that many of the sermons written for the "South Congregational" needed but little alteration to adapt them to "Emmanuel" Church. Laird Collier, the eloquent young Wesleyan, at a single spring leaps full-armed into the ranks of the Unitarians. It is less than a sabbath-day's journey from "Plymouth pulpit" to "All Souls;" and you may toss a biscuit over the space from Hepworth to Chapin.

To what extent this facility of transition may affect our numerical growth in the next decade or two is doubtful; but it is not very material. As long as the movement in all Protestant communions is towards unity *on the basis of primitive Christianity* (leaving liberty of private interpretation untouched), whatever becomes of our particular body, our cause prospers; the idea on which we have stood from the start prevails, — the idea, namely, of bringing back the church to the ORIGINAL GOSPEL, cleared of all forms, definitions, and dogmatic affirmations, which have gathered round its simple truth in passing through the obscure philosophies, the dense ignorances, and the dismal superstitions, of the Christian centuries.

The surface growth of our church may not be rapid. The prospect of its absorbing all other communions, — with which enthusiastic prophets sometimes dazzle our eyes, — a soberer survey may not see to be near, and the best wisdom may not regard as a result to be prayed for. Recent reports from that part of the country where it has bestowed most abundant labor, bearing on the question of its increase, are not so kindling that we are in danger of being consumed by them. They show no such hungering for Unitarian Christianity as haunts the dreams of the American Unitarian Association, however manifest the need of it. They do show, however, — and this is their most gratifying testimony, — that a liberal interpretation of Christianity, with the practice of setting forth its applications to life, and of dwelling on the power and need of its spirit for the regeneration of the soul, has stolen the march upon us, and is doing our special work in many orthodox churches, insomuch that the Unitarians be-

longing to them feel no call to "come out and be separate," even though an inchoate Unitarian parish invite them. They show, moreover, that what is wanted by the masses who have drifted away from the old orthodoxy is not Unitarian Christianity, but Free Religion ; and that unless we have that to give, they will wait till its apostles come round before committing themselves to an organized worship. Thus the problem of our future is complicated alike by Free Religion and by the New Orthodoxy ; and our relation to the latter, as well as the former, becomes an interesting part of the situation. Let us look a moment at that. Evidently the New Orthodoxy is cautiously feeling its way, with some misgivings of the danger, towards a common ground of faith and co-operative work with the Higher Unitarianism ; and this Unitarianism, it may be confessed, is willing that it should keep on feeling till it finds. It is in no hurry for its own sake to have such common ground discovered, but would be happy to stand upon it if it should be. It has gone on a good while since Evangelicism, not knowing what it did, shut the door in its face, and has become tolerably self-poised and independent in its isolation. It has not forgotten the Portland resolutions, which junior Evangelicism will live to rescind ; and it has no need of orthodox endorsement, its credit being sufficient for its legitimate business. There is plenty for it to do in its own way with the means which the Divine Providence has put in its hands. It is not cast down, but full of courage and confidence and holy joy ; and its prayer is, that the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit may "make it that it be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." The Unitarian Church is happy in feeling the tie of brotherhood with all mankind and in cordially recognizing as of "the household of faith" all "who love the Lord Jesus," by whatever other names distinguished. So it has nothing to do, no step to take, unless of mere form, in order to bring it into effective working relations with any other Christian communions. Its spirit is always willing. Indeed, it feels itself to be standing even now in a relation to the New Orthodoxy which ought to be very kindly ; for not the least of its satisfactions

is that of seeing its own faith working to-day so profoundly in her bosom, bringing forth therein a tenderer trust, a less painful and lugubrious piety, and a love, not of "*souls*" only, but of MAN—which is more—that promises to be full of mercy and good fruits for the life that now is, as well as for that which is to come, and for the miserably poor and blind and naked in our own borders as well as in the uttermost parts of the earth. It rejoices to know that the life of activity in social improvements, of sympathy with all forms of suffering, of fellowship with Christ in his ministry to the wretched, and of trustful, filial resting in God, generated by its teaching, is preached in hundreds of churches in which its name would be accounted a reproach. "Plymouth pulpit" is alive and burning with the liberal faith; and multitudes, chilled through and through by the old orthodoxy, are flocking thither every Sunday to get warm. And, marvel of marvels! this faith wakes the humanities under the Calvinistic ribs of Park Street, and coruscates in the brilliant periods of her young minister, while the huge ghost of her Griffin (who "never dreamed of a Murray") continues to hobble, gouty, up and down her aisles in pale disgust with the odor of the new sanctity,—"of the garments that smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia out of the ivory palaces." Methodism, in the depth and power and comprehensiveness of her love, has always possessed the spirit of this faith, and so has no reluctance to receive its disciples at her love-feasts, and hugs dear old Father Taylor—God bless him!—to her bosom when he returns radiant and rejoicing from its festivals, asking him no questions for conscience' sake. She goes openly into the shambles and buys its literature, and, while her principal organ growls over the bone, she regales herself with the meat.

Our survey of the situation of the Unitarian Church, therefore, while disclosing temporary embarrassments, exhibits many grounds of hope and confidence in respect to its future. It is a power in the country seen and confessed. It is a spiritual power,—a power for good,—more penetrating, more active in its working, more widely diffused in its influence, than at any former period of its history. The demand

for the productions of its preachers, scholars, poets, writers of fiction, was never so great as now ; and as long as it is able to supply a more thoroughly humane and Christian literature, higher in its reach towards God, broader in its sympathy with man, wiser in its dealing with great social problems, deeper and sweeter in its spirituality, than can be obtained elsewhere, the demand will continue to increase. Let us stand fast in the strength wherewith Christ hath made us strong and in the liberty wherewith he hath made us free, and let us go bravely out "sowing precious seed," though it be "weeping," and we "shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us." If any, still ignorant, ask concerning our creed, it is too long to be read on communion-days as a church covenant, but its title runs, "THE NEW TESTAMENT OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR, JESUS CHRIST."

In the various applications of Christianity to the life of society a boundless opportunity opens to us. Whoever has read Edward Hale's "Sybaris" (and other papers in the same line of observation, by its popular author) has before him a graphic sketch of a world of Christian work in this direction. "The fields are white;" and it is gratifying to notice a disposition in other communions to combine their strength with ours in such labors of humanity. Surely differences of faith ought not to be in the way of co-operative charity. Surely Trinitarian and Unitarian, if the spirit of their common Master is in them, can work together in stopping up the sluices of disease, physical and moral. Baptist, Methodist, Episcopalian can find no difficulty in uniting with Quaker and Universalist in building hospitals for the blind, the deaf, the insane, the inebriate, and providing peaceful retreats for the homeless and broken-hearted. Catholic ought to be able to join hands with Protestant in furnishing clean and commodious tenements for the poor, and enforcing the laws of health in them ; in redeeming the "perishing" classes of his own communion from their squalor and wretchedness, and clothing them with garments for coming with decency to pay their devotions to the blessed Virgin.

In whatever direction we look, then, but especially in that

of practical Christianity, our future seems bright with promise. The prospect is encouraging. The call is urgent. The field is broad. If our church might be the instrument in God's hand of making even one city like this wherein it was cradled thoroughly Christian in its spirit and life, a city of the beatitudes, a city wherein each dweller should cheerfully bear other's burdens, whilst patiently carrying his own, a city in which the abjectness of unfriended poverty should never be seen and vice have no haunts, a city the people of which should fill the churches of every name, each Sunday, with a glad and holy worship that would be strength and joy to them, how much worthier and nobler, how much more effective as an apostleship of Unitarian Christianity, this would be than any number of little parishes dotting the surface of the country of which we might make an annual boast! Evangelicism would melt before such an appeal and Free Religion would have no answer to the argument. O Soul of Christ! O Spirit of the living God! baptize our church, and all churches, for such work.

"It is written of Boleslaus, one of the kings of Poland, that he still carried about him the picture of his father, and when he was to do any great work, or set upon any design extraordinary, he would look on the picture and pray that he might do nothing unworthy of such a father's name. Thus it is that the Scriptures are the picture of God's will, and therein drawn out to the very life: before a man enter upon, or engage himself in any business whatsoever, let him look there and read there what is to be done, what to be undone; and what God commands, let that be done; what he forbids, let that be undone; let the balance of the sanctuary weigh all, the oracles of God decide all, the rule of God's Word be the square of all, and his glory the ultimate of all intendments whatsoever." — *John Spencer.*

THE MOSS-ROSE.

BY F. W. GUBITZ.

WHEN the Saviour was upon earth, he spared no toil or suffering to fulfill his holy calling. Once he was crossing the desert to reach a few people longing to hear the word of life, regardless of the bleeding wounds in his feet and the dry waste with no fountain of water for his lips. At last, in the distance, a grove appeared, whose green and soft carpet of moss had been often overlooked by the traveler, who had not deigned to bestow upon it even a passing glance. The moss, even in its humility, grieved by this neglect, whispered, "What an insignificant being I am, to be thus wholly forgotten! Always upwards to the high trees and forwards to the distant road turns the eye of the passer-by; and, however invitingly I offer myself, no one bends towards the small, wee plant. Yet will I not murmur, but bear, in future, quietly my lot; for He who made me knows why this lonely destiny is appointed."

At that moment the moon's disk gleamed brightly from behind a cloud; and the moss inwardly rejoiced, as the silent sea of glimmering light flowed over its velvet surface, and crowned with silver glory each tiniest point and beautiful spirelet.

Then the Saviour came near, wearied and faint, his form bowed, leaning upon a staff, and his beautiful head bent down upon his breast. Pale was the heavenly, thoughtful face; and out of the eye beamed still the glance of mildest love. Ah, how grateful was the cool, soft moss! and, with folded hands, he praised the goodness of God, who had given, on the borders of that burning waste, this fresh, green covering. Tarrying, and thankfully regarding the moss, he spoke: "Thou dear, soft herblet, how precious art thou to me, though others think little of thee! Still keep thee in thy patient humility; and my Father in heaven, who adorns the field with lilies, will make thee glad also with a beautiful gift, if I ask him."

And, as the Saviour reclined to take the welcome repose, pure and ruby drops of blood trickled from the wounds of his

feet upon the moss ; and each clear drop became a little rose, which, growing and spreading, covered the whole carpet of moss. But the moss, ashamed that it had even aspired after the kindly, beautiful ornament, carefully covered it up with its little leaves, that it might make no display ; and whosoever has experienced this feeling, and rightly appreciates it, takes the moss-rose as the emblem of humility.

A WINTER MORNING BY THE MERRIMACK.

JAN. 4, 1870.

Lo ! what a miracle is here
To welcome in the new-born year !
Babe Spring before his time awoke,
From the warm South looked forth, and broke
In million bits stern Winter's chain,
And there they go floating down to the main.
In the morning sun how the bright links gleam
As they hurry in acres along the stream,
All eager to reach the sea's broad space,
And melt in the ocean's great embrace.
Oh, halcyon hours, that prophesy
Of soft days coming by and by !
Bright glimpses of a world where still
A spring-time is blooming no winter can chill ;
Where morning cometh, but never the night ;
And where on the hills a summer light
From the face of God forever flows,
And, murmuring thoughts of deep repose,
The river of life sweeps broad and free,
And the love of God is the infinite sea
Wherein the icy chains that bind
The evil heart and the darkened mind
Fall forever and melt as they fall,
And the love of God is all in all !

C. T. B.

CHRIST'S CONVERSATION WITH NICODEMUS.

BY REV. A. P. PEABODY, D. D.

In determining the true sense of our Saviour's utterances to Nicodemus, we need, first, to take into view the person and the occasion. This is too often omitted in scriptural exposition, though in interpreting any other similar narrative we should deem it of prime importance to know thoroughly to whom, and under what circumstances, the reported words were spoken. We know of Nicodemus only through the Gospel of John, and only through three transactions in which his name appears; but in these three his identity is so well preserved that we can get a pretty clear conception of his character. It is very evident that, when he is first introduced to us, he already believes in the divine mission of Jesus; for he could have had no earthly motive to make a false profession of such belief. But he is a member of the Sanhedrim, one of the Jewish aristocracy, a Pharisee, no doubt: and, as a magistrate, he cannot openly sanction a teacher under whose auspices there are already symptoms of commotion among the people; as a man of elevated social standing, he cannot become the companion of Galilean fishermen and mechanics; as a high ritualist, he cannot authorize religious proceedings entirely aside from the rubric of the synagogue. At the same time, even a stealthy, nocturnal visit from so distinguished a person will, he thinks, be gratifying and flattering to the young teacher, who, should he at some future time become illustrious, will be sure to remember thankfully such signal condescension and kindness.

It would seem that this visit was regarded by the evangelist as especially characteristic of the man; for, on the two subsequent occasions on which he appears in the narrative, he is introduced as the person "that came to Jesus by night," as if that one circumstance had shaped itself into a sort of

significant *cognomen*. We next find him in a council of the avowed enemies of Jesus, with a feeble timidity that reminds us of his former self, blandly suggesting that it is the legal course to hear a man before condemning him. He is instantly snubbed* by his brother Pharisees, and retires without another word in behalf of the calumniated Jesus.

Nicodemus makes his last appearance, not by the cross, not among those who prepare the sacred body for removal, but after it has passed into the private custody of Joseph of Arimethea, — again by night ; for this is implied in St. John's words, which, paraphrased so as to express their actual sense, would read, "There came also Nicodemus, who came for the first time to the living, as now to the dead Jesus, by night." He brings, indeed, a tribute of costly drugs to embalm the body, thus indicating at once his sincere reverence for Jesus, and his shame of being known as his disciple.

Now our Saviour's utterances were always addressed to the specific faults, wants and needs of those immediately before him. When the rich young man desired to know the way into his kingdom, Jesus told him to sell his possessions, and give away their proceeds. When they came to enlist his services in settling a quarrel about an inheritance, the lesson was, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness." He was not wont to utter general precepts ; and we are able to state Christian ethics in general propositions, mainly as those propositions are inferred from the comparison of particular rules or directions with the occasions for their promulgation. It was not in accordance, then, with our Saviour's manner for him to enter at once with Nicodemus on what is commonly called the doctrine of regeneration, on the arcana of the inner life, which are by no means the "earthly things" of which Jesus, toward the close of the conversation, professes to have spoken, but pre-eminently "heavenly things." Nicodemus could not take the first step Christward, till he had overcome his unworthy shame, till he had risen above his coward-

* A very coarse word, but one which has not its synonym in the English language, and it expresses precisely what was done here.

ice, till he was prepared to profess openly and fearlessly him in whom he believed in secret, and to show himself by day what he was willing to acknowledge himself to be by night. The outward so acts upon the inward life, that it was impossible for him in his then condition to have the heart of a disciple. If Jesus did not with regard to him depart from his uniform method, he on this occasion exhorted his midnight visitor to make an open profession of his faith.

It is not without an important bearing on the interpretation of this passage that it is immediately followed by the account of the public baptisms performed by the apostles under the auspices of their Master, by the dispute between John's disciples and a Jew,* to which these baptisms had given rise, and by the retreat of Jesus from Judea into Galilee, on account of the umbrage taken by the Pharisees because he (by his disciples) was baptizing even more persons than John.

We now ask what is meant by being *born again*? The word rendered *again* (*anōthen*) means also *from above*, and is in this sense repeatedly employed in the Fourth Gospel. But that the Syro-Chaldaic word, of which it is here the translation, meant *again* is evident from its having been so understood by Nicodemus, and from the fact that Jesus did not indicate that he had understood it amiss. It was also, it would seem, a phrase which Nicodemus might have been expected, as an adept in the current phraseology of Judaism, to understand. "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" What then did the Jews mean by being *born again*? It was a current maxim of the Jews, as appears from the Talmud: "If any one become a proselyte, he is like a child new-born." This idea was carried so far that it was further asserted, "All the relations which he had, being a Gentile, now cease." In attestation of this new birth, the proselyte, whether man, woman, or child, was baptized, or immersed, to denote the washing away of all that appertained to the former self-hood. It was, no doubt, from this ceremony

* Our translation reads *the Jews*, after the received text; the true reading is in the singular.

that the baptism of John and of Jesus was derived. There is, therefore, a strong probability, in our apprehension a certainty, that being *born again* here denotes baptism, considered as an open profession of discipleship, and of the entirely new religious *status* involved in one's becoming a disciple of Christ.

The precise phrase here used does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament. But the noun rendered *regeneration* (*paliggenesia*), which from its composition has precisely the same meaning, is used twice in the New Testament. Its use in one of these instances has no bearing on the question before us. It is in Matthew xix. 28: "Ye who have followed me shall in the *regeneration* (*i. e.*, in the new order of things, the new birth of society consequent on the establishment of my reign), when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The other case in which this word is used is in Titus iii. 5: "According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of *regeneration*, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit." Is there tautology here? The "renewing of the Holy Spirit" can have no other meaning than what is commonly called regeneration. If the preceding phrase had the same signification, why was there need of this? The sense of the passage would have been complete without it. And why *washing* of regeneration, if there were not reference to baptism? We cannot but believe that the writer of this epistle meant to comprehend in one sentence the two prominent features of the Christian *status*, the form and the spirit, the outward profession and the inward grace, the baptism by which one took up his cross in the sight of the world, and the renewal of mind, heart, and character, typified indeed by baptism, but wrought only by the divine influence on the soul. This passage, then, tends to confirm our interpretation of the phrase, "Being born again."

These things premised, we will now give a free paraphrase of the passage in question, beginning with John ii. 28.

When Jesus was in Jerusalem, at the Passover, many were compelled by his miracles to acknowledge, in some sort, his claims on their belief. But theirs was not a faith in which

he could put confidence ; for they were not prepared to make such sacrifices as his disciples must needs make. He read the hearts of men, and knew how feeble a hold he had on these Jews, who were dazzled by his mighty works, but who had not received his truth and his spirit into their hearts. One of them, Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrim, unwilling to jeopardize his position by the open show of sympathy, came to him by night, and said, "Master, we know that thou art a teacher sent by God ; for the power of God alone could have enabled thee to work such miracles as we have seen." Jesus answered him, "One cannot become my disciple in secret. The reign of God which I am establishing on earth can have only open, fearless subjects. As you Jews make proselytes by baptism, in like manner am I making disciples. Only by baptism, by the undisguised avowal implied in baptism, by being born again, in the sense in which a Gentile is born again when he becomes a Jew, can any one become my disciple, and thus enter the kingdom of God."

Though the Saviour's words were such as Nicodemus would have readily understood had they been employed concerning a Gentile, he cannot conceive of their application to himself, a devout and advanced Jew, occupying the most august religious position which any man could hold. There is no sense in which he can imagine himself as needing to be born again. He falls back, therefore, upon the literal meaning of the words, and says, "How can a man be born when he is old?" [We have, probably, only the heads of the conversation ; and Nicodemus undoubtedly protested that in spirit he was with Jesus, but was not prepared yet to give such external signs of his adhesion as would bring him into reproach, and endanger his honorable standing as a highly respected Pharisee and ruler.] Jesus replies, "It is not enough for one to say that he is with me in spirit, — the new birth must be consummated by its outward sign, — except one be baptized, as well as convinced and impressed, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit ; *i. e.*, an outward rite and profession are visible and tangible, — they fix a man's

position, and thus react upon his character; while a mere secretly intimated loyalty of spirit is invisible and intangible, vague and evanescent, for lack of outward manifestation always liable to be abjured, sure to be abjured whenever it involves loss, disgrace, or persecution. Marvel not, then, that I still insist on baptism, and on the new external and avowed position which baptism implies. The wind blows where it will; but it cannot be traced, it has no definite locality, it is nowhere; and equally indefinite and indeterminate is the position of him who avows in secret his spiritual sympathy with me, yet is afraid to show it by daylight and in the face of men.*

Nicodemus replies, "How can these things be? How can it be that the sincere approval and sympathy of so important a man as I am can be so utterly valueless?" Jesus answers, "Art thou the professed teacher of thy brother Israelites, and understandest not what I have said? I have said only what you, Jewish precisians, would say to any Gentile who professed himself convinced of the divine authority of your law. I speak what I know: I testify of what I have seen, though you are not ready to accept my testimony. I have disciples who are so openly; who have not only been baptized into my kingdom by John,† but have given up their fishing-boats,

* Some of our readers may need to be apprised that it is the same Greek word (*pneuma*) that is here rendered both *wind* and *spirit*; and the play upon the word involved in this comparison renders it the more certain, that, by *spirit* here, Jesus denoted something as vague as the wind. The same Hebrew word (*ruah*) equally denotes *wind* and *spirit*; and it was probably a Syro-Chaldaic form of this word which Jesus used.

† John's baptism was evidently the only baptism that the apostles received, and it was virtually Christian baptism. We know not its formula, but it was undoubtedly in the name of the coming Messiah. According to our translation, Paul (Acts xix, 5) would seem to have rebaptized certain of John's disciples at Ephesus; but we regard this as a mistranslation,—as a conversion of the latter part of Paul's speech to them into a narration of what he did. The whole speech, as we understand it, is, "John's was a true baptism of repentance. He said to the people, that they should believe on him who would come after him, *i. e.*, on Jesus Christ; and those who were baptized in the faith of this declaration were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

cast themselves upon Providence, and are ready to share with me my homeless and persecuted life ; while others have heard me, and been attracted by my mighty works, but have not been willing to meet the first breath of reproach or shame for my sake. I have now spoken to you of earthly things, of matters which, as a Jewish teacher, you ought fully to comprehend, and yet you refuse to acknowledge in relation to me what you would readily admit in the case of a would-be Gentile proselyte. Expect not then initiation into heavenly things, into the profounder truths of my religion [which Nicodemus had probably expressed a desire, or at least a willingness, to hear] ; for against these, for a still stronger reason, your heart would be impenetrably sealed. If you cannot openly and honestly profess what you say you believe, that very double-mindedness would preclude your faith in the higher and more spiritual verities which it is my mission to reveal."

Here, perhaps, our Saviour's discourse ends ; and what remains may be the evangelist's commentary upon it. However this may be, here ends the portion bearing upon the relation of Nicodemus to Jesus and his Gospel.

We have no reason to suppose that Nicodemus ever advanced beyond the secret friendship for the Saviour that led to this interview. We believe that he was never canonized. If he had been, of what multitudes in all times and in our time would he have been the patron saint !

We have been led to this view of the conversation with Nicodemus slowly and reluctantly ; for our profound belief and feeling are in full sympathy with the ordinary exposition. We never abandon without pain an interpretation of Scripture hallowed by early associations, and by the general reception of devout Christian believers ; but we have never been constrained to make such a sacrifice without an ultimate consciousness of gain. A portion of sacred Scripture from which the traditional meaning has been dislodged has always revealed to us a larger truth, or else has taken its essential place in the illustration or confirmation of some truth that needed its support. We have often in this way been re-

minded of the Saviour's promise, that whoever yields up aught for his sake shall receive an hundred-fold. We believe that the passage under consideration is worth more to the Church, under the interpretation we have now given to it, than in the sense in which it is commonly understood.

The doctrine of regeneration (so-called) does not stand in need of it. It is expressed in almost numberless forms: it is implied in the whole tenor of our Saviour's teachings and of the apostolic discourses and epistles. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," is but the compendious formula of the entire spiritual teaching of the New Testament; and it has more equivalents in the sacred writings than we have space to enumerate. Moreover, were not this truth so clearly and frequently expressed, it constitutes so essentially the very soul of Christianity that no serious Christian believer could fail to apprehend it, or, rather, no one could be a serious Christian believer without verifying it in his own experience. We have no objection to the phrase, *new birth*, as applied to the renovation of heart that takes place under the gospel by the transforming influence of the Divine Spirit. It is not too strong. It is as nearly literal as any figure can be. Man is not born with powers and propensities whose natural development will make him a Christian or Christian-like; will save him from sin, or fit him for heaven. There must be, not development, but transformation; not improvement, but renewal. We cannot, then, on dogmatic grounds, demur at the common use of the word *regeneration*; but, while there is no lack of equally strong expressions to denote inward renewal, we would gladly redeem this, which is intensely strong, for the use to which it is applied in the New Testament, and for which it is needed.

We value our interpretation of this passage, because it gives a completeness, otherwise wanting, to our Saviour's testimony as to the essential importance of baptism. We have several instances in which he repeated emphatically, near the close, instructions or admonitions that were co-eval with the beginning of his ministry. Thus the driving out of the sacrilegious hucksters from the temple-court, with its impressive

lesson, which might be expanded into a manual of piety, marked the commencement and the consummation of his Messianic mission in Jerusalem. But unless baptism be referred to here, Jesus is not represented as having made any mention of it except in his last commands to his disciples before his ascension. Then, indeed, he lays intense stress upon it; but if it was of sufficient moment to occupy so large a place in his thoughts at that hour of parting, can we suppose that we should have been left without a single previous word from him with reference to it? We speak of its importance, not because we have the slightest faith in the talismanic efficacy that has been virtually ascribed to it in every age since the primitive, but because we believe that there is a constant interaction between the outward and the inward, between form and spirit, rite and consciousness, position and character. Christianity, not by its own defect, but by the defect of human nature, tends to generate a disesteem for even its own ordinances. The Hebrew idiom, which expresses the distinction of more and less by an affirmative and a negative, is a type of men's too prevalent modes of thought and feeling. What they are taught to hold in secondary regard they are too prone to dismiss altogether from their regard, especially if they have ever seen it occupying wrongfully the first place. Now Christianity, by laying supreme stress on the inner life, has cherished in many of its sincere disciples an utter indifference to forms and ordinances; and for their sake we need and rejoice in every word, act and trait of the Divine Master that can show how he loved and prized the ritual of piety. We regard baptism, not indeed as a "saving ordinance," for this no ordinance can be; but as in itself a means of grace, more so in the Saviour's institution and purpose than we make it, and as holding a foremost place among the conditions to which is attached the promise of the Holy Spirit.

The interpretation which we have given, though ignored by all, or almost all modern critics, must have had currency and acceptance in the earlier ages of the Church, as it evidently shaped the phraseology of the Roman Catholic, and thence of the English baptismal service. In the English service it is

declared, after baptism, "This person (or child) is now regenerate, and grafted into the body of Christ's church." That these words can be caviled at and repudiated, is but an index of the decadence of the Church in all its branches ; for were the Church what it was in its primitive, and will be in its latter-day glory, admission to its membership would seem nothing less than a new birth. Baptism is, or ought to be, the epoch of an entirely new and immeasurably higher order of relations and influences, — the inauguration of sanctifying and energizing forces of intensest efficacy ; and this, whether its subject be an adult or an infant. The adult who professes his sincere penitence, and seals his sincere Christian faith in baptism, in the theory of the Church at least, adopts his fellow-disciples as his fathers, brethren, kindred, by more sacred and enduring bonds than those of blood and birth, and is thus reciprocally adopted by them. He is strengthened by their strength and gladdened by their joy. So far as he and they are in sympathy of spirit with their common Master, they are united one with another, and the peace of God flows into all from each, into each from all. By his first birth he is born into the community, the nation, the dying world ; by baptism, he is born into the commonwealth of the redeemed, the people of God, the ranks of those who have passed from death unto life. In like manner the baptized child is re-born as the child, nursing, pupil of the Church, and should be so received into her shielding, guiding love, that he shall be surrounded from the first with holy influences, led to consecrate his affections as they open to his God, his powers as they expand to his Saviour, his life to duty and to heaven. Let the Church, instead of sneering at baptismal regeneration, do all that in her lies to verify it. Her Divine Head regards her baptized members as new-born ; as such, they have the freshly spoken blessing of the Father ; be it hers to bestow on her regenerate children their full birthright of Christian sympathy, love, watchfulness, holy example, and beneficent influence.

FROM AUERBACH'S GEVATTERSMANN.

BY C. C. SHACKFORD.

ALL READY! cries the conductor on the railway train. Only a few minutes' stop, and the cars are gone. Consider that thou hast only a few minutes to stop at the station of life; consider that thou canst not tarry if thou hast forgotten aught, when the great Conductor calls his "Ready," and the great locomotive, named "Death," takes its start.

But—and this the Gevattersmann says to you and to himself—we are never "all ready," whether we take into account any single work, or the whole life-work; and this no one knows better than the faithful workman himself. Our life is piece-work, whether we are journeymen who work by the piece or for day's wages. If you have expended thought and labor, you must still confess, at last, that you have never yet attained the perfection which you proposed as your ideal.

There never has been yet any man who has accomplished anything in the world, who, at the end of life, could say, "It is enough: I am perfectly satisfied with my work." The noblest benefactors of humanity have desired in their last hour to be able to perfect their work, to confirm it, to carry it on to some grander issue. It is not a love for life and for its enjoyments, but a love for the holy work of life, that awakens this painful longing. He who leaves the world with this feeling has desired the perfect, and he is happy in that desire. And it is a consolation in all separations from any mode of activity, that others will carry it on to completeness. Sufficient, if in our doing there is a good seed sown for a future harvest; if we furnish a handle which others can take hold of. And so I call out to you and to myself, Ready!

And may this thought inspire us, when we hear it said, "All Ready!"

Look around, and you will see that it is not true that the world remains always in the same spot. Do not laugh, if I

quote a word of the great philosopher Hegel; for the words of the learned are not merely for scholars, but for all, and I subscribe to Hegel's declaration, that "the history of the world is the progress towards the consciousness of freedom!" There are to-day, not only more people in the world than ever before: among the thousands who live at the present time, there is a larger number of those who are able to think than ever before.

EVERY one can read well enough his own hand-writing, however much of a scrawl and a scratch it may be; and he wonders that other people can't read it too. Every point and every letter are there,—so he thinks,—and it's very strange that people can't see any better. Is it not the same with many other things,—our own actions, for instance. They seem clear enough to us, and nobody ought to call them bad: we understand them, and why shouldn't other people understand too? Moral: Write such a hand, and do such acts, that others can read and understand them.

BLESSED be the hand which gives joy to a child: who knows when and where the blossom will again unfold its beautiful petals? Cannot almost every one remember some benevolent man, who has performed some friendly act to him in the quiet days of childhood? The Gevattersmann, at this moment, sees himself as a barefooted boy, at the wooden paling of a poor little garden in his native village, looking longingly at the flowers which bloomed so silently in the bright, silent, Sunday morning. The owner of the small patch, a wood-cutter, who spent the whole week in the woods, stepped out of the house to pluck a flower to carry it with him to church. He sees the boy standing there, breaks off the most beautiful pink,—it is red sprinkled with white,—and hands it to the boy outside the fence. Neither spoke a word, and the boy ran home with a hop and a leap. And now, here in this distant home, and after so many experiences of so many years, the boy gives utterance to the grateful feeling which then filled his breast. The pink has long ago with-

ered ; but it blooms again to-day with a new freshness and life.

I WAS once on the Schlossberg, and beneath me was the mist.* The night came on, and my heart asked, tremblingly, "Is it to be night, and remain night as long as you live?" Then a light gleamed forth here and there. In the night, each one has his own light ; and these lights are like the gleaming sparks from one great primal fount of fire. And then a voice spoke within, and said, "Keep, yes, keep the fire and the light until the clear day dawns!" And this day has already dawned !

DOES thought make one happy? you ask. It makes one a man, I reply ; and whether as a man he is happy or not depends upon himself. Each one is under the obligation to acknowledge what it means to be a man, to be a citizen ; and it is his duty to help others to be the same. Herein is culture one with religion. Religion demands, not that one should stand above, who shall have belief for the rest, but that each shall believe for himself, and work out his own salvation. As this is both possible and necessary, so culture demands that each one should know and understand for himself ; and this is just as possible, and just as necessary.

To every child who has read "Robinson Crusoe," it should be said, —

"Note well that this man, who has written this interesting book, was named Daniel Defoe, and he wrote also two pamphlets : one against ecclesiastical tyranny and in behalf of the right of freedom of opinion ; the other showed that the doctrine of election was false. For these writings the author of Robinson Crusoe was publicly set in the stocks, and punished with two years' imprisonment. He bore what was intended as a disgrace with equanimity, and the cheerful consciousness of having served the cause of truth. Note this, ye readers of "Robinson Crusoe."

MY FATHER WORKETH.

A SERMON. BY REV. ROBERT COLLYER.

My Father worketh hitherto. — JOHN v. 17.

IF men ever begin to study the real gospel of Jesus Christ, as it stands clear of the numberless things we call the gospel, and try to analyze the power that it has over human souls, one of the first things they will see in its nature, setting it above every other conception of God of which I have any knowledge, is what I would venture to call the sense of fair play and even-handed right running clean through it from first to last.

In the older revelations the Lord God is supreme, not alone in his power, but in the way he will use it. Men like David, and Job, and Moses, and Isaiah, whose conceptions of the divine nature are the deepest and best in the old Scriptures, never doubt his goodness or his justice or grace; but it is all included in the most exalted idea that was possible to them and their time of the justice and goodness and grace of a supreme, oriental ruler, bound by nothing but his own will, working out that will in his own way, amenable to no court, subject to no criticism, and demanding a blind obedience, while he reserves the reasons for it. So they say we cannot find him out by searching. He is higher than heaven, deeper than hell, and will render no account to his creatures for what he does. There it is: they must make the best of it, and believe the best about it; and then the best will come that can come, through an unquestioning and unreasoning reliance like that which Isaac had when his father was about to offer him up, as he would have offered a kid; and so "though he slay me, yet will I trust him" was the loftiest reach of the deepest souls in the old time before Christ.

It is for this reason, I suppose, that the word "Father," in connection with the Almighty, occurs only twice in the Old Testament, and then in a sort of secondary sense: once in a

similitude where the Psalmist says, "Like as a father pitieth his children, even so the Lord pitieth them that fear him," an illustration that may go very well with the character of a good despot; and then again, "I will be a father to the fatherless," a sweet, good promise, but only, at the best, a promise to be a *foster* father. It was impossible for the best men in the world, and the noblest thinkers, to get beyond this, if their souls were full of these thoughts, very natural to their place and time, and to them the best that could be imagined, — a God altogether above them.

But in this revelation of God, the gospel of Christ wrought a revolution we do not yet begin to understand; and as all revolutions turn on some one simple expression, such as "Liberty!" "Equality!" "Fraternity!" "Taxation without representation is tyranny!" "All men are born with inalienable rights!" and so on, — the golden letters of the French revolution, the American revolution, and the great revolution in England under Cromwell, — so this also turned on one simple expression, "Our Father." When Jesus said those words, and spake as one having authority, and the people cried, "Never man spake as this man," it was the battle-cry for a war on the old idea of the kingdom of heaven in the light of a despotism, a war that can never cease until the whole world is won to the whole doctrine that centres naturally and inevitably in this simple expression, "Our Father." It is a war, however, that is not yet ended. All the churches and all the creeds say "our Father," while they differ infinitely in their conclusion as to what "our Father" means. If you had been at the social-science meeting in this city a few weeks ago, you would have seen a thin, nervous, sensitive person, whose life, long ago, was identified with one of the most dreadful illustrations of the way in which we can differ about this simple matter that I have ever heard of. His father believed in the fatherhood as a despotism. He was the representative man in one of the greatest sects in America. When he died, a few years ago, all the papers in the land were full of his praises, our own among the rest; and he was a noble man: but he believed in the fatherhood as a des-

potism. This son, then a very small child, for some childish whim, or it may be for some good reason, disobeyed him. The tiny thing got a flogging, was shut up in a room to itself, was fed on scant bread and water, was flogged again and again; and, after a dreadfully protracted struggle, when the poor little nature was clean worn out, I believe, the child gave way. It was the saddest thing I ever heard of, except that which was printed in the papers a year or two ago about another minister who held the same ideas about the Father as a despot, and made a worse use of them even than that, somewhere near Pittsburg. That is always Moses, and Job, and David over again, without the grace and goodness they put into their revelation of God as a being altogether unaccountable, doing what seemeth good in his sight, and exacting a blind and unquestioning obedience. It is no use talking about the fatherhood in connection with such a conception of God as that. Such a father is a despot. It is Judaism over again, robbed of its mercy; and when, now and then, you meet such a man, or hear a sermon from preachers who hold the doctrine, it is not the gospel at all, but that darkness and dread that preceded the gospel, or something worse. The true fatherhood is not in it at all: "the tree is known by its fruits."

2. In the text I took last Sunday, I spoke to you about the great confidence we can gather from a perfect faith that the divine energy has lost no atom of its perfection as it was in the beginning, but, in the very nature of things, must have set in more and more toward man and all his interests, giving him greater chances, as one age follows another, for a better life. I tried to tell you how these words, "my Father worketh hitherto," are as good for us to-day as they were when Christ first said them. That "hitherto," as it stands in the gospels, means 1869; and the more certainly we can rest in that full conviction, the better we shall be prepared to enter on the new year. Now I want, this morning, to speak from the text a second time, but to change the emphasis, from the time in which this divine activity is manifested, to the activity itself, and make the text read, "My Father *worketh* hitherto;" for

as I have thought this week on what I should say to you to-day, I have felt that I had not finished my thought. We all needed to understand more clearly this revelation of the Father's working in this world, and in your life and mine, and then to ask what we are doing to work with him, or to neutralize, as far as we can, all his endeavor.

And this is the first thing to understand, that the revelation Christ makes in the text, of the relation of God to our life, is very different from that which is commonly held even in the Christian church. It is a general idea that the Almighty is so supreme in his nature and power that he sits on his throne, in a wonderful placidity, achieving everything that he does by the mere action of his divine will, and can never be in the least disturbed, or need to put forth any effort. That he is Lord and Master, in the sense of setting us all to work, but then does nothing himself. He watches us from his high place, and marks our success or failure, knows whether we are faithful or faithless in our tasks, and will reward or punish, as we succeed or fail. Vast numbers, indeed, go beyond this, and make the divine Power, not only something that requires no effort, but something that is purely indifferent to our effort too. God, to such thinkers, is in the earth, and the sea, and the winds, and the sun, in all the awful forces we call nature; and in that way we can come to him, and work with him, and so enter into his spirit and life. I cannot touch this belief, this morning, except simply to mention it. The other that I have mentioned comes home to more hearts and minds. We conceive of the Almighty, as so purely almighty that what we know as labor, work, effort, toil, is totally unknown to him, and only known to us through our weakness and limitations. In the nature of things, such a conception carries us away from God. We know nothing in this world of any goodness that we can admire, and worship with the best power of the soul, that does not take hold of its possessor, and cost him what it comes to. The greatest man is always, in some sense, the greatest worker. You cannot touch life, in any direction, and not find this to be true. If a man makes something in machinery that has a vast blessing in it, when you get at the

truth about how he did it, you are sure to find that the last result is hard work ; there was a great pull on the whole nature of the man, painful and protracted, before he succeeded. In the fine arts it is true. Reynolds, Reubens, Raphael, Angelo, Hogarth, Turner and Church, have done their wonders, by being wonderful workers. Early and late, and always they gave themselves to their task, and won their greatness by being great workers. Napoleon, the greatest figure in modern times, and Alexander, the greatest figure in ancient times, as men of action, were both men of inconceivable energy and activity,—all the time at work. It was not enough that any of these men made others work for them : they did that too ; but that was the mere influence of their own vast and perfect energies as they constantly put them forth. To sit in some supreme place, and simply bid one go this way, and another that, and one do this thing, and another that, while they did nothing but order their servants around, has never been the secret of any man's greatness since the world stood. Millions of men have been in a position to do that, and have done it, and were flattered by the titles of greatness, and called Lord and Master ; but their lordship and mastership was a mere shadow, and their name died with them. Go to the sacred graves of the world this morning, to where men go on pilgrimage for very love and duty, when the body is not to be found any more that was buried there, and they are all the graves of hardworking men, whose greatness was bought by their mighty labors. They were "mighty in working, doing wonders." So, no doubt, it is a prime principle in human life. We feel it to be so, by rights, and we see that it is so ; and we are satisfied, when we see it, that this is right.

Then, if I may make my principle more simple still, I will ask you to consider what the result would be, if you should see some family in which all the children were dutiful and good, and willing to work to the best of their ability, in which the father was unspeakably more able than they, but we should notice that he simply set them to work, watched them all day long at their toil, bearing heavy burdens, very sorely

tried, breaking down with great loads of labor, while he himself sat in perfect ease and quiet, but doing nothing actually to help them in their toil, except to say, "Good children, I love to see you work like that. You are getting things into fine order: when you are through, I shall say well done." Would not our feeling be, that such a course on the part of the father was not only unfair, but heartless and cruel? We could never be satisfied to call that man, in any good sense, a father, and we should say that, to propagate a belief in his goodness, while he acted like that, was subversive of the sweetest and purest laws that govern the relation of the father and child. He must work with them, in some sense that is fair and true, or he must fall below them in all our ideas of what is best.

Now let us make the loftiest application possible of this principle. I make it fearlessly, because I see that it is entirely true to this revelation that Christ makes in the text, as well as in other parts of his gospels. He never appears to imagine for a moment that the Father, the great Fountain of life, the Creator and Preserver of all that lives, is above us in being above all labor. He only knows him in his uttermost almightiness as the Being supremely identified with *labor*, working so that what we do is, at the best, but a hint and shadow of his perpetual doing. "My Father *worketh*" is the strong affirmation of the greatest soul that ever came to tell us anything about the Father; and it is neither wise nor good to try to explain this away by falling back upon God's omnipotence, and supposing that, because he is almighty, that answers all questions of his working, and leaves him in the silence and stillness of eternity to make and unmake by the mere action of his will without any other endeavor. It is, to be sure, a question about which we know nothing at all in the abstract, as in the abstract we know nothing indeed of God; but it is in no such sense that I would touch it. I am considering the question as it comes to us from the soul of the Saviour. He saw the truth in this simple light, and it is the sublimest truth that ever came to man on this question of what he finds himself compelled to do in order to be a man. It reveals God in a perfect and perpetual sympathy with his children in all true

labor. What they do, as they work the work of Him that sent them, is no more than the adumbration of his working. "My Father *worketh*" is a gospel truth for all good workers. It comes, bearing in upon the soul a sense of fair play and even-handed right. That we should be where we are, and compelled to do what we must, in order to be faithful men and women, is no mere ordinance of one who sits above us, and sets us our work, and watches how we do: it is the call of the Infinite Worker to his children for help. If I may use the word in perfect reverence, "He leads the field:" we do but follow him, when with our might we do our best. We have no need of course to suppose that, in any way we can imagine, "our Father" can feel as we do in much of our work. The divinest work is that which is done with a magnificent mastery like that which they tell of Angelo, when carving a block of marble; he would work with such might and truth that he could keep clouds of chips and dust falling all about him, yet never make a false stroke. That is the way of the greatest workers: it may be some hint of the Father's working. It was clear to Jesus Christ, be this as it may, that there, in the heart of the universe, is the Father at work; and when he would do the Father's will, he felt that he had a *work* to do, and cried, "How am I straightened till it be accomplished." And his inspiration to work was hidden in his conviction that the Father was at work too. He was not obeying a master, but helping a worker.

3. Now I would fain feel sure, as I begin this new year, and know that it will bring me about as much work of some sort as I can possibly do, that I am working in the wake of the mightiest of all workers. The gospel for me is this truth, that "my Father *worketh*:" not that he orders and I obey, that he sends and I go, that he determines and I submit, and watches with a fine, effortless supremacy, while I slave; but, in some such good sense, as Swedenborg would teach us, this that I do, that is honest and real, is but the visible outflowing of an infinitely honest and divine reality. And, in thinking like this, I would by no means confine myself to those higher things that we specially consider to belong to God's kingdom. The

"Celestial Mechanic," is not that the name of one of the most wonderful works of modern times? It is a good name for all mechanical work that is done after the pattern of the great true Worker. I have no need to be ashamed of my mechanism, if I have got it right: it is exactly what the great Worker would have done in my place; and, when I do it as well as ever I can, I do it for him. Let no man be ashamed to say, in this sacred place, and on this sacred day, that the divine Worker, as he stands revealed to us in his work, is a mechanic. Honor to the sturdy, steady machine-maker; he is a co-worker together with God, while he works honestly and well. The thing he is doing fits close into the divinest laws and the divinest order of which we have any knowledge. It is made after the pattern of that which was revealed in the mount.

Fifty years ago, Brunel was looking at a piece of old ship timber that had been bored through and through by a little animal naturalists call the "*toredo-noralis*." And "How do you manage to make that hole?" he said, as he looked: "if you can do that in such perfection, you are worth studying." Now some of the wisest men in England had many a year been trying to make a tunnel under the Thames, something like this so happily completed under our own river. They had failed, and failed again, and given it up. It struck Brunel that this "*toredo-noralis*" was making a tunnel. The divine Mechanic had made him for that purpose with a wonderful fitness. He made a machine as nearly like that animal as circumstances would allow: the principle was the same. He took out the patent for it just fifty years ago, and succeeded by it in boring the tunnel where everybody that had tried before had failed. Now the mechanism was simply the development of a hint he had got from the divine Worker. It was the starting point of a vast gain in all work of this kind; the revelation of a principle that we shall hold on to now as long as we have such work to do. Still, while the patent that he took out in London was well enough so far as it secured to him the right to his own labor, the true patent of which that was born was taken out in heaven. God is a mechanic. If ever that cry is heard again, which of itself was fatal to the cause

in which it was uttered, had there been no other fatality about it, — greasy mechanics, — there will be only one answer to it by that time I trust, the proud, reverent, glorious shout of millions as they point to the great Worker up in heaven. God, then, is a mechanic too. It is at the foundation of all he has done. Working in shops and forges, we work with our Father. All that we do is but a hint and intimation of what he is doing, and has done already. All things that are true to the truth of mechanics are true to the truth of God. They are the visible embodiment, in wood and steel, of something the great Worker has done before. We "can never save space to beat the bee."

I follow this revelation of Christ still, when I say, once more, that all things below the man are less than the man in the sight of the Maker, and, therefore, not to be counted great and good, except as they touch his life. It is infinitely wonderful and beautiful to me, to notice how this great Teacher distinguishes, in his great lesson, between the man and the nature that is below the man, in their relation to God. What can be more wonderful, he says, than the white and gold of the lily? Solomon had no such array; but that silver and gold is from God. And what can come sweeter, as a picture of Providence, than the way the sparrow is fed, utterly unaware, as it shakes the dew from its wings, where it shall find a breakfast, but sure to find it, as it is sure to seek it. The provider is the Maker, and the sparrow is content. But then when he talks of sparrows and lilies, he says they are God's own, and that is the best he can do for them. Then he turns from the bird and flower, to the man and woman; and we might expect that he would say, You are God's also, and if God so clothed the lily, shall he not clothe you? if God so feed the bird, shall he not feed you? But that is an awful word — God. The heart has fainted while it tried to understand what God means; but what "our Father" means comes right home: and so he says the God of the lily and the sparrow is your Father.

So the highest of all the creatures in his creation is the nearest to his heart; and the welfare of what we call mankind

is the closest of all divine interests ; and the highest welfare of mankind his highest work. It is not, therefore, hard to see how that work which ministers to this highest welfare is more Godlike than that which ministers to the lowest. It is good to do that which shall elevate and sanctify the body ; it is better to do that which shall enlarge and deepen the mind ; it is best of all, if we can, to work for that which is perfected at last out of both, — the soul. All that ministers merely to the body, be it ever so good, is good as far as it goes ; but whatever ministers to the body and soul together is greater and better. If some wise, good man, skillful in remedies, could have taken John Calvin, for instance, into his care when he was fifteen, and kept him free from dyspepsia and all the horrors that come in the train of that dreadful malady, he would not only have wrought an unspeakable blessing for Calvin's own soul and body together, but he would have broken up and dispersed, in its very inception, a black cloud that has been a curse of Christendom, from Calvin to this morning. And we might have had all the good and glory of predestination and election, without its overwhelming evil.

Those that reach the soul through the body do a greater work, and a better, than those that minister to the body alone, and are nearer, in their working, to the work of the Father. It was this that inspired this great Worker who gave strength out of his own life to the cripple at the pool ; not that he would merely give him strength to go about his business, and earn his bread : he would make the blessing that had come to his withered limbs reach through all the organism into his withered soul, and fill that with noble and gracious aspirations. Setting him on his feet, earthward, was only a figure of the way in which he would have him soar heavenward. And so it is with all work : what touches the soul, through the body, is greater and better than what touches the body alone, and more essentially like the work of our Father. I feel sometimes as if I would fain ask good physicians, and all those laborers that are working to restore our maimed and broken humanity, whether they ever think of what they are doing, as they talk about the heart and brain, and the system and con-

stitution, if they ever think of what they are doing for the shrouded, stunted, suffering, human soul, and how divine is the work they do, when it teaches that divinest part, and not only saves the life on earth, but does something towards saving the soul for heaven.

It is not a wonder, therefore, that what this great Worker did, who came to show us the Father, should gradually assume a purely spiritual nature, and be directed towards the souls of those about him, because that was in harmony with his sense of the work the great Worker of all was doing. It was divine in its way, that, as St. Cyprian says (speaking while the traditions of his life were still fresh), he should make carts and plows, and be a builder. The divinest Worker that was ever seen on the earth was a working mechanic before he was anything else, and that was but the fulfillment of the law of the divinest Worker in heaven. The first thing we know of our Father through his works, when he laid the foundations of the earth, and set the stars in their order, is the revelation of a working mechanic. When Jesus, who said, "My Father worketh, and I work," left the shop, and came out into the world to do that which was higher than the mechanical, to relieve human suffering, restore human energies, and help the soul through the body, his work grew more and even more divine; for he felt that if the soul be whole, the man is whole: if that be clean, the man is clean. Life deepening within us deepens all.

Now, finally, let me restate my truth, and take it into my heart. This gospel of the divine Worker is a revelation of the fair and true and just. As I can believe it, and live on it, I can grow content. I come into this world without any will in the matter this way or that, and find myself compelled by my very nature, and the nature of what is about me, to toil and care. I find three explanations of this state of things. One is that made by men like Mr. Carlyle, who tell me that I find myself in the midst of a great ocean, holding on to a piece of wreck with my fellow-creatures; and I can show valor and endurance, patience and loving kindness, and make the best of it as we all drift along together until we drift into the dark,

and are seen no more. God is the great ocean in such a case, and just as indifferent as the Atlantic was the other day to those poor wrecked mortals on the "Hibernia."

The second explanation is that which so many hold, that our tasks are set us by One to whose nature ease and effort are exactly the same; to whom work is but a thought, while to us it is a very great, and sometimes a very grim, reality.

The revelation of Jesus Christ is the only truth touching our work and workers that brings the sense and feeling of fairness and clear, shining goodness. He tells me that my Father is not an autocrat, setting painful tasks that his children must do, while he sits on the throne of his glory, receiving adoration and praise, but that he is completely identified with all my work, so far as my work is identified with his will. The child goes to school, and strives at these tasks that are so hard, and such a burden, but his heart and hand and brain are not isolated atoms striving alone: his Father works with him, stroke for stroke. The young man goes out of school to make his way in the world, and finds it very hard to work: it taxes all his energies and all his capabilities; but he is determined to succeed if hard work will do it. Let him take this comfort to his soul, that he is not alone: in deep sympathy with even his mechanical and material strivings, his Father works with him, stroke for stroke.

Men and women toil at the work they have found to do; and now and then they feel that the work goes hard, and they would like to lay it down, and have done, and go to their rest. It seems a sad necessity that they should have to toil as they do; but if all men and women who are striving honestly to do their work would take this truth home, that their Father worketh too, not in some ideal make-believe fashion, or, as we should say, "going through the motions," — but with an infinite earnestness caring for all things, and working at all things from the least atom to the mightiest sun, and finding in his work his own infinite blessing, — if men and women would take this into their hearts, and feel, that, while they work the Father worketh also, stroke for stroke, goes before, does the hardest of it, is completely one with them in what

they are doing, then they would know the truth we used to sing in a good old Methodist hymn, —

“With thee, co-workers, we forget
All time and toil and care :
Labor is rest, and pain is sweet,
If thou, my God, art there.”

May God help us to take this great truth as we get it, simply and sweetly, into our hearts, that our Father *worketh*; and then that makes all good work sacred, and the end of all good work certain.

CHURCH AND MUSIC.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN. BY K. G. WELLS.

ART begins in religion, and in its highest development returns to religion. The religious need of man demands that his artistic power should be of service to him, and stamps every beginning of art as its own possession. When art has attained its full strength, it freely and thankfully bestows its highest faculties upon religion, feeling that religious themes are its loftiest subjects. It has always been so from the oldest times down to the latest. The Grecians, of all people the most happy in their arts, and who, according to Winckelmann, created beauty as a top is turned, knew of nothing higher than the Zeus ideal of Phidias; their most beautiful building, the Parthenon, was a temple; their most beautiful poem, the Iliad, gave form and dignity to the gods; their most noble tragedies were a part of their worship.

So has it been with Christian art. The composers, who consecrated their art to the service of the church, always wrote in the manner of the art period to which they belonged. Great masters went to work with faith and love, with reverence for the saints, and devotion to the holy, justifying man-

kind in its expectation of a work which would rejoice, instruct, and ennoble its own age and posterity. It mattered little whether they were working upon vocal or instrumental music, or whether one of the eight church notes or one of the more modern tones laid at the foundation. Piety consisted not in the *modus ionicus* or *æolicus*, not in double counterpoint, or in whatever else art could put in motion; just as little were the antique pillars, the round arch of the Romans or the pointed arch of the Gothic, decisive in themselves of the beauty or sublimity of a cathedral. With these the true master brings out the right; with these, the mere amateur, or one comprehending only the technicalities of his art, effects nothing. So it is with music.

Modern church composers and architects have fared alike. It is remarkable that the oft-observed analogy between music and architecture finds its fullest parallelism in their historical development in the field of church art. Contemporary with the old Gregorian song, almost as its architectural counterpart, we find the old Basilica. The ancient building breathes forth the same devotional awe; the broad porches, with their strong, earnest mosaic figures on a blue or gold ground, are not less solemn than the song of the *Tē Deum*. The style, a capella, with its artistically involved, but apparently simple harmonies, with its voices rising one over the other, and its long-sustained notes, corresponds to the clear, noble Roman, with its quietly arranged masses. The Palestrina style has arisen from the Gregorian song, as the Roman architecture is the product of the Basilica. It denies sensuous movement in music, the periodically separated, pleasing little melodies not even having a presentiment of it. Architecture and church music specially developed themselves in splendor-loving Venice. The rich Venetians surrounded their cruciform cathedral, St. Mark, with colonnades and chapels, and crowned it with a group of domes, instead of the one dome of the Byzantine central building; with the same consciousness of power over the richest materials, the chapel masters of St. Mark arranged everything for two or three choirs.

The songs of Palestrina, woven as if out of light, mark the

highest point in music of pure spiritualism. This extreme point is needful wherever re-action occurs. In architecture and the plastic arts it was effected through the so-called Renaissance, by which attention was again turned to the antique. The total change in music was produced by the same causes. In 1590 several artists, assembled in Florence, conceived the idea of the "restoration of ancient art," and consulted together concerning the revival of Grecian music with all its traditional wonders, especially its dramatic music. As nothing was really known of it, they wrote something representing the ancient musical drama, *Eurydice*, *Ariadne*, *Daphne*. These recitatives, on the whole, were so formal, whilst the need of solos in dramatic situations led to monody (instead of the earlier four part song), — thus necessitating a regular instrumental accompaniment, — that melody and musical periods conceived in their modern sense sprang up, first, with Viadana. After the great period of Italian music, the "beautiful" period blossomed. Rome finally took the sceptre from Naples, and our present music is a daughter of the Neapolitan school. The church compositions of the earlier period can be compared to the master works of the earlier renaissance.

Meanwhile a style was forming in Germany, which at last, in the works of the Bach family, could be placed by the side of the Gothic. The great Sebastian, who, from one subject, built up a gigantic, aspiring, mystical work, alive in every part, is the great master of this musical style. His *H minor* mass translates into tones the Cologne cathedral: its varied ornaments of melody remind us of the stone blossoms of the Gothic; its scores, with their strange looking notes, their sixteenths and thirty seconds, seem like outlines of the Gothic dome; whilst the quietly arranged white notes of Palestrina have also their analogies, which each one can draw for himself. The later renaissance finds its counterpart in the church works of Hayden and Mozart, whose spiritless imitators the Rococo represents.

Our church choirs are most fortunate in the possession of such incomparable songs as Palestrina's, Orlando Lasso's,

Scarlatti's; but shall we therefore refuse to our time the right to create anew, or lessen its obligation to do so? So long as the church is the great hospital for millions, and so long as art works and strives, it must be permitted to perform the tasks which the church gives it, and to assist in defense of those rites which have shown themselves such true guardians of art. What kind of a period would that be in which art no longer attempted the religious,—and what kind of an art, moreover?

The Gregorian chant is the specific, indeed the only undoubted church style. It arose in the church, through the needs of the church, replete with that original power which is peculiar to all that has *become* music, not been made into it; as, for example, the "Folk Songs." As an integral part of the rite it has its inestimable value for all time. But for art, which must undergo development, and live through a life, other conditions are necessary; for its mission is far wider. The arts gladly enlist in the service of the church, through it they have become great, beautiful and strong; yet, unless carefully watched, the service becomes slavery. Whoever limits the free development of art robs it of its life.

Whenever we see noble, powerful characters, like Beethoven or Handel, we gain in strength, whilst the commonness of lower natures has an opposite effect. Various talents, or no talents, have pressed, with or without a vocation, into the church choirs. The old musical "Viennese Almanac," of 1796, contains the following significant sentence: "In Bohemia, it was formerly the practice and duty of a schoolmaster that, as superintendent of a school, he should himself each year compose a new mass, and, if he omitted this hereditary custom, should be considered as a bungler."

In private devotion the spiritual song is preferable; for public worship, the church music, properly so called. The former may express, as warmly as it chooses, the subjective feelings and the details of the life of a religiously excited soul; the other must endeavor to allow this detail of feeling to rise into a certain general religious "sensorium commune."

The really strong choral, by this very characteristic, is separated from the mere spiritual song.

The artistic counterpoint weaving of the notes in the "Fugue and Canon" is, in itself, hardly appropriate for the church or religion; but its meaning is so full of devotional feeling, that its form seems eminently appropriate for the church; for its strong progress, the alternate clauses of its voices, and its other characteristics, are diametrically opposed to the *entrainements de la passion*. Self-collectedness, burial in one's self, restraint of the passions, are the effects for which church music must strive. The effect of that music which consists in the sensuous charm of the sound is not suitable for the church; for the church does not indeed deny the sensuous nature of man, but would subject it to the spirit, and must not, therefore, use for its aims whatever is based on sensuousness. Rossini's "Stabat Mater" is beautiful as music, but is not adapted to the church. Mozart, by his love for melody, is occasionally induced to smuggle in something which is rather a feast for the ears than an elevation of the spirit or heart, and which is not reprehensible because it is a feast for the ears, but because it is only that. As an accompaniment in the service of God, the church does not require any excitement of the passions, or any recognition of the expression or pathos of the passion as justified.

Where, on the contrary, the expression of passion kindled into devotion, but restrained through a sense of devotion, pours itself forth, the church could not forego it. Else it would have to reject the poetry of the "Stabat Mater," the "Dies Iræ," the "Penitential Psalms." The heavenly importuning "Christie Eleison," in Beethoven's second mass, is replete with ardor, and the "Recordare" in Mozart's "Requiem" is full of anxious sighs, of touching, friendly address, of humility, anxiety, repentance, and love, so true and intense that the greatest dramatist could not express it more lovingly; but neither is operatic nor theatrical. The "Dies Iræ" in this requiem has been much blamed. When in the poem the breaking assunder of the world is spoken of, the music must necessarily bear the character of an outward concussion,—

must partially indicate the dynamic sublimity of the rolling thunder ; but the effect is not obtained by the mere tumult of tone. What fright seizes the choir at the idea, *quantus tremor est futurus*. The softer voices (soprano, alto, tenor) would escape from this conception, which the earnest basses remorselessly repeat, until all, at last overpowered with increasing fear, break out into the cry of horror ; *quantus tremor est futurus*.

On the other hand, it is not profanation if every note does not last a quarter of a minute, or if two violins or clarionets are heard ; if an "Incarnatus" is given with a mild and fervid rendering, or a "Crucifixus" in a tragic manner : for such rendering lies in the nature of the subject.

The Gregorian chant must be regarded from another point of view. It forms an integral part of the rite itself. It belongs to the exactly appointed ceremonies as much as the various celebrations in the order of the church calendar. The church must insist that always, everywhere, and by each one, it should be heard in the same precisely preserved and unvarying way. The Catholic, in entering his church, in the most distant land, has the dear feeling of home : the church says to him, "Where I am, there art not thou a stranger ; where thou art, there am I, with all my consolations, blessings, and means of salvation for thee and for all who reject them not."

Let singing, regulated by the church, be restored to its original purity and everywhere carefully fostered. Let the music allowed by the church everywhere find its interceders and guardians, who shall be convinced of the greatness of their mission and filled with the thought that their music assists in the service of God, and not that divine service is the reason or occasion for the display of their musical powers. The idea, "church style," is relative. The pious mind consists neither in time nor key. One element is in every style, — there is one peculiarity which must be spread over all, like the gentle glimmer of a higher light, — and this is pure beauty ; but beauty is based upon spiritual freedom.

THE POPE AND THE COUNCIL.

BY GEORGE E. ELLIS, D.D.

"OF what possible use to men is an infallible revelation from God, without an infallible interpreter?"

Since the era of Protestantism, this question has made the well-plied plea of the advocate of Romanism and the papacy, addressed to all who hold, or are committed to, the right of private judgment in religion.

The question takes for granted an acute and substantially jesuitical champion on the one side, and expects to find a half-furnished, inconsistent, and easily discomfited listener on the other side. The Roman Church, having tried to train its acquiescent disciples for many centuries in an implicit obedience of her teachings, all, or most, of those who at the Reformation cast aside her authority, as usurped or misleading, had recourse, for a substitute, to the Bible. The change was, on the whole, for the better, though there were considerable qualifications of it as an absolute good. It is a curious fact that the use and exercise of the right of private judgment in interpreting the Scriptures, were most resolutely claimed and most freely put to trial among the first generation of Protestants. One might have supposed that the mass of the people, brought under the influence of the Reformation, would have held in abeyance for a while the right claimed for them, and recognized by themselves, to take the Holy Book in hand, and to read it with the light which God might give them. Habits of acquiescence, and deference to the opinions of divines and learned superiors, might have been expected to have kept the people under a temporary restraint till the scholarly and the wise could deliberately digest for them a creed and form of discipline from the Book. But, so far was this from being the case, that freedom of private interpretation, extreme individualism of opinion, and eccentricity of speculation went to their greatest lengths of license among the first

generations of Protestants. Confessions, creeds, and articles were drawn up in order to harmonize differences which they had not been in season to suppress. And when an attempt was seriously made to digest from the Scriptures formulas of dogma, and to construct a platform of discipline and institutions, it was found that variances of opinion, even among those best qualified to guide themselves, covered the whole field of religious thought and observance to such an extent that the utmost aim of divines and ecclesiastics, aided by the civil authority, had to satisfy itself with constructing separate national churches with acknowledged and admitted differences in creed, confession, and observance.

When Bossuet thought to reclaim to the Roman fold some of the weaker and disheartened disciples who had left it, by exhibiting the "Variations of Protestantism," he had the easiest possible theme for his eloquence and argument. Only he failed, as all the champions of his church in their controversies with Protestants have ever since failed, to recognize the fact, that, to any one outside that fold, the act of choice, or the submission of faith, which would bring him into it is, of itself, an exercise of private judgment as full, as free, and just as hazardous, as is the individual decision which adopts any form of Protestantism. Protestants have had to sustain, as best they could, the consequences of committing themselves to the Scriptures, either as a sole or as the chief authority for them in faith, or as only one among the sources and guides of religious knowledge and belief. Romanism is powerless in its pleading with all who honestly and intelligently intrust themselves to the best action of their own minds and consciences in using all the means which God has given them for working out a creed and a code of religious truth and duty; and Romanism is proportionately successful in its arguments or its sophistries, as it finds in those who are ready to listen to it any degree of persuasion or admission that somewhere, in an ecclesiastical institution, or a book, or a living authority, there is vested infallibility to teach and save men.

The question with which we began, therefore, implies an

existing belief, in one to whom it is addressed, that infallibility attaches to the Book. While Protestantism, under its most able and consistent championship, has never been committed to this assumption, Romanism has endeavored to identify it with Protestantism in order that, in the accepted belief that such infallibility must reside somewhere, the substitute repository of it which Rome offers may prove the resource of those who are confounded by the variations of the sects. The Puritans as a class, with those on the continent of Europe who have been historically and sympathetically in accord with them, have come the nearest to maintaining the absolute infallibility of the Scriptures; and the Puritans have stood most firmly in their Protestantism, yielding but few disciples to be reclaimed by Rome.

The Protestant prelatical churches have divided their fealty between the Scriptures and a vaguely defined authority of the church, as represented by some of the fathers, by tradition, and one or more councils; and exactly in the degree to which the ministers or the members of these prelatical churches have accepted this ecclesiastical theory of authority in faith, are they accessible to the special plea of the Romanist. Such inconsistent Protestants have always furnished, and are furnishing now, what are called "perverts" to Rome.

The physician tells us, that, in order that we may be seized upon by a cold or a fever or any contagious disease, two necessary conditions must be in cotemporaneous activity: first, the system itself must be in a state of susceptibility; and second, there must be an outward exposure to an exciting cause. There is a parallelism between these conditions and those on which the plea of a Romanist may hopefully address itself to a Protestant. The ingenious and skillful advocacy of an infallible church, of a divine right over conscience to be administered by some human exponent of it, must be urged upon one who is in a state of mind already prepossessed in favor of the theory, or baffled and dissatisfied by his efforts to find a substitute for it; those efforts having been made under the assumption that he is entitled to discover some-

where an infallible guidance in matters of faith. When any one makes that assumption, his only refuge from hopeless disappointment is to commit himself to what he regards as the most plausible theory, or to the most skillful pleader.

But the tables are now turned upon the disciples of the Roman Church. If it be any satisfaction to Protestants to observe the discomfiture of their opponents from this point of view, they may now enjoy it to the full. The Romanists committed themselves to the position that, with an infallible revelation, God had given them an infallible interpreter. And now they are realizing among themselves all the discords and distractions of Protestantism, only in a more concentrated form, by having to debate and to face the question, whether this infallibility is vested in the opinion of the Pope, or in the decision of a council. Setting aside the pleasure, whether malicious or fair, which is to be found in the dissensions and discomfiture of opponents, there is interest enough for Protestants in watching the development of this issue raised by and among the disciples of the papacy themselves. After having been informed, at intervals, for many years, through the newspapers, that Pius IX. was in such precarious health that his life must soon close, and after his political complications and the reduction of his temporal prerogatives threatened, in the opinion of many, to close the line of pontiffs with him, he has presented himself before Christendom with a vigor of personal activity and self-assertion which falls little short of audacity. Hildebrand himself did not start more courageously or defiantly than does Pius IX. signalize what must be the approximate termination of his rule. There must be fire in the aged man's heart, whether or not there be the ripe, calm wisdom of the gray hairs in his brain. His encyclical letter and syllabus were fulminated against Protestantism. His council opens discord in his own fold.

We have long been persuaded that in the large and antagonistic fellowships into which Christians are divided and classified, the work of re adjusting both their doctrinal formulas, and their practical action to better and fuller appre-

hensions of Christian truth, would be far more effectually promoted by individual and associated protests and efforts within the membership of each communion, than by assaults made upon them from without. All these fellowships are reached and influenced by the prevailing science and culture of the age. The literature and lectures, the political and social discussions of the time, afford materials of interest common to the whole of Christendom. There is not a learned academy, nor a lyceum, nor a social club, nor a political party, nor even a list of subscribers to a magazine or a religious newspaper, which does not include disciples of many Christian creeds, and those who hold no creed. From the larger intercourse and the broader range of converse thus enjoyed, even by the representative men of different fellowships, very many derive advantages which directly tend to a reconsideration of their sectarian limitations and to a relaxing of their exclusive bonds. Put these men on the defense within their respective folds, where they feel that they have sectarian trusts to watch over and a prerogative to stand for, and that representative dignity of theirs will rouse their pride to maintain it. It is noticeable that, in the conventions and platform gatherings of the denominations at the anniversary celebrations or centennials, the approved policy is to make most conspicuous some one or more members of their fellowships having a reputation or notoriety in public life, with large relations to the community, as a philanthropist, or a leading politician, or a man of wealth, or of known popularity. The presence of such on these occasions is, to the sect so represented, of the nature of a boast of high connections; but to those who look on from the outside, it is a token that such representative men must have some broader ideas than the mass of their constituents. Leave each sect and fellowship to confront, to deal with, or to appropriate more or less of the common influences of a progressive culture to an enlarged intelligence, and we shall find that it will within itself furnish the most fitting and effectual agents of its own adjustment to the progress and knowledge of the age.

An illustration of this truth, pleasing, if not amusing in

itself, may be found in a quarter to which we have never been in the habit of looking for instruction in the methods of sectarianism. The example is suggested to us by what we read in our daily papers, as we are writing these pages. The small but thriving, and every way respectable, though somewhat fantastic fellowship of the "United Brethren," — sisters being included, — better known as Shakers, have heretofore been allowed a complete immunity from the warfare of religious discussion. We do not remember any instance or occasion, within our reading or observation, in which they have been brought within the arena of sectarian controversy, or been challenged to stand for their creed and discipline before a questioning community. They have been let alone, though their thrifty settlements have been visited by many summer tourists, who have purchased their unadorned wares and harmless simples, and been spectators of their manner of worship. But the spirit of the age has mastered even them, and called them forth, wholly of their own prompting, to assert themselves in a most public way. One of their most acute and well-informed elders has written his autobiography for the "Atlantic Monthly," the most widely circulated of our periodicals. Last spring a large delegation of the brethren and sisters claimed a series of hearings, and drew crowds, during the hurry of anniversary week. And just now we read of lectures, addresses and singings, by prominent delegates of their societies, as engaging the attention of large audiences in the Music Hall. There is a curious intermixture of the grotesque, the irrational, the transcendental, and what is called the progressive philosophy and advanced speculation, in the addresses as reported on those occasions. Surely the speakers have read Emerson, Henry James, and Swedenborg. They perfectly flanked at both wings the disputants on the woman question, and whatever apology they had to offer for their own extraordinary attitude before the community was boldly and stoutly outspoken by Elder Evans. Who can doubt that, as a consequence of their unchallenged appearance and self-exposition before a curious community, there will be a quickened activity of mind, and a restlessness of

interest in the result, manifesting itself in these long winter evenings among the brethren and sisters, as they gather by "families" around their snug fires to enjoy their cracked nuts and their cider apple-sauce?

We wish only that the bishops in council at Rome may have as comfortable a time of it, as they are — we cannot say debating — but attempting to dispose of, the questions which the Pope has himself raised to perplex them before the eyes of Christendom. The principal of these questions is understood to be substantially this: Whether the council itself will dispose of the uncertainty as to the alternative between Pope and council as the exponent of infallibility. No assault or agitation, or new point of discussion and controversy which Protestants could have raised to re-open the issue between themselves and the Roman Church, could possibly have been so searching in its process, or so threatening in its tendencies, as is the occasion which has summoned the prelates of the Roman communion to their representative capital. For ourselves, we are at a loss to understand the reason or the emergency of the case which induced the Pontiff to institute a measure which, by this time, he must himself realize, tends simply to a breach in his own fold. He is understood as desiring to have a decision of the council pronouncing his own infallibility in deciding and interpreting dogmas and doctrines for the church. He assumed this prerogative in pronouncing upon the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary. He may or may not have in view a purpose to exercise the authority, the recognition of which he asks from the council, on some one or more matters that he has in mind. If, however, he intends only to have the doctrines and opinions of his encyclical and syllabus approved as infallible, that result would be enough to signalize his pontificate.

We have been reading with great interest a book of singularity for its calm strength, its thorough scholarship on the range which it covers, and its direct and courageous dealing with the subject matter before the Roman Council. It is a translation from the German, and is entitled, "The Pope and the Council." (A very attractive edition of this transla-

tion is published in this city by Roberts Brothers.) No other designation of authorship is given than is intimated in the word "Janus," which may be regarded as expressing a union or combination of minds and pens engaged in its composition, and as suggesting the outlook in both directions — conservative and progressive — which characterizes the scope of its discussions and arguments. An introductory notice by the translator says, "It will be obvious at a glance to the reader, that this work emanates from Catholic authorship, and discusses the great religious crisis through which the church and the world are now passing from a Catholic, though a 'liberal Catholic,' point of view. That it bears evidence of no common attainments and grasp of mind, a very cursory examination will suffice to show." The writer of the introduction proceeds in a very dignified tone, consistent with the high strain of the book, to commend it to the reader for its noble spirit and its masterly vigor.

Three centuries have passed since the last council — that of Trent — was held by the Roman Church. For reasons, the force of which may be equally well estimated by Protestants and Romanists, such assemblages are regarded as full of risks, and beset by perplexities which are, if possible, to be avoided. The book before us quotes Cardinal Pallavicini, a historian of that council, as saying, "To hold another council would be to tempt God, so extremely dangerous and so threatening to the very existence of the church would such an assembly be."

The book is an essay on ecclesiastical politics: "in one word, it is a pleading for very life, an appeal to the thinkers among believing Christians, a protest based on history against a menacing future, against the programme of a powerful coalition (the Jesuits) at one time openly prevalent, at another more darkly insinuated, and which thousands of busy hands are daily and hourly employed in carrying out."

It is the internal peace of the Roman Church itself that is now threatened by inevitable issues raised by all the forces of modern freedom, science, and progress, to resist which forces is the avowed design of that party in the church to which the

Pope has committed himself. The church has a nominal discipleship of one hundred and eighty millions. Whether it shall enlarge its fold, or be convulsed by discussions that must result in a schism, will depend, in the view of the author or authors of this book, upon whether the council, under the dictation of the Pope and the Jesuits, ratify the infallibility of the Pope as an article of faith. To prove the falsehood and folly of such a theory from the records of the church, to protest against such ratification, and to predict the mischief which must follow from it, are the objects of this volume, which we commend to our readers as one that will reconcile them to bear the responsibilities of freedom.

THERE is a story of one that, falling asleep, dreamed that he was in a large field, hedged in on all sides with thunder, lightning, hail-storms, and the like tempestuous weather, and that he saw certain houses afar off, and, making towards one of them, craved admittance till the storm was over. What art thou? said the master of the house. I am such a one, says he, telling him his name. And I, says the master, am called Justice; thou must not look for any comfort from me, but rather the contrary. At another house he was answered, that there dwelt Truth, one that he never loved, and must therefore expect no shelter there. Well, he goes to the third, the house of Peace, and there he finds the like entertainment. In the midst of this distraction, he lights upon the house of Mercy, and there humbly desiring entrance, was made welcome and refreshed. This may be but a dream, imaginary, yet the application is a real truth: then thus, it is not the sewing up together of some few fig-leaves of merit (as some suppose) that will cover the nakedness of a poor distressed soul; not the outward varnish and goodly splendor of moral virtues and human performances (as others think) that can add anything of comfort to the wounded conscience. When the habitations of justice, truth, and peace are bolted fast upon the drooping soul, then are the gates of mercy wide open to receive it, there being no salvation but by the mercies of God in Christ Jesus.

— *John Spencer.*

WATER.

WATER's wonders who has told?
Naught in nature I behold
Half so Protean in its forms, —
Each peculiar in its charms.
Lovely in the placid lake,
Grand where awful surges break.
In the ocean it may be
Type of vast eternity ;
In the river's ceaseless flow
Time's perpetual efflux show.
Through the world's unceasing round
Ever active is it found ;
Rudest, strongest in its wrath,
Gentlest in its noiseless path.
Rocks are powerless to withstand
Water with its glacial hand ;
Smallest lichen on the stone
Through the water's aid has grown ;
Tiniest midges o'er it fly,
Draw from water life's supply.
In the spring, when flowerets burst
From the dark and silent earth,
Each from water slakes its thirst, —
Each to water owes its birth ;
And in winter, when the sky
Pours down countless, graceful flowers,
All the snow-storm's vast supply
Comes from water's magic powers.
Through the cloud of summer rain
Rises still the sevenfold arch ;
Morn and eve with watery train
Of glory crown the day king's march.
Every form that water takes
Some new sense of beauty wakes,
Since the day when o'er its face
Godhead moved, and left his trace.

H. T.

JESUS AND THE RESURRECTION.

BY WILLIAM MOUNTFORD.

As the Mosaic dispensation was drawing towards its close, more and more express became the ministration of the Spirit through it. Moses had been a lawgiver, and David and Isaiah had been prophets; and through it also, Gideon had been like the sword of the Lord, and Solomon like a miracle of wisdom. But patriarchs and prophets, and all the angels, who had ever been concerned with them, religiously, were but like servants, when compared with him, to whom "God giveth not the Spirit, by measure." For "when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him."

To the foregoing does any one say "ancient Hebrew idiom!" disdainfully? And so perhaps it is. But what then? Was there ever a philosophy which did not have its peculiar terms and phraseology? Or, is science, in the least degree discredited, because its nomenclature is foreign to the mind of a Kaffir? And is craniology, or is the science of even dead bones, so simple, as that a person can read a treatise on osteology, with the same intelligence and words, which suffice him perfectly as a merchant? And history and science, in combination, as to the connection of man with God by the Spirit, ever since there was first a manifestation of the divine image on the earth — is it anything strange as to this, that it may perhaps need interpretation, in some degree, even as geology does, or astronomy? How many men, there are, who grow spiritually blind, through self-sufficiency! and with their flippant speeches, how many more persons there are, who are perverted from the simplicity of truth.

No past age can ever be known as it was, except by a lamp, like what the light of that time was. And mere self-assertion on a subject like that of "the fullness of the time" would be of the nature of blasphemy, except as desecration about a

temple was never possible from mere chirping sparrows, because of their being ignorant.

Does a man deny the resurrection of Jesus, as having any pertinency for him, because of its involving considerations, for which he has not the requisite learning, or for which he thinks that he has not time ; or because it claims to be something so very unlike to the tenor of his daily newspaper ; or does he demur to the New Testament, as being of any special concern for him, because of its antiquity ? Then let him remember, that from this present hour to the first day of the first year of our Lord, is a shorter space of time, than it was from the birth of Jesus Christ, to the promise which was made to Abraham, at his call, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

By every drop of blood in his veins ; by every modification of every thought which he has ; and by every stripe of suffering, ever endured in the world, and through which, in any manner, bodily or spiritually, he is healed, man is a child of the past, throughout all its generations. Men are historically born, and are bound historically. And the more of a man, that any individual may be, so much the more solemnly, is he responsible as to the ages behind him, for what they may have to testify. Disown the past simply as being ancient ! a man might as well disown God as not being his own little self !

Length of time, merely, does not separate human beings. After three thousand years, the Book of Ruth is like a tale of yesterday. And yet at this very hour, hate cannot possibly understand love, and is separated from it, by what as to space, may be called infinity. As to historical events, time is almost nothing in comparison with distance by philosophy, or spiritual state.

The state of mind being changed in which documents are read, it is as though the documents themselves had been written afresh ; and then what had seemed to be discrepancies according to a materialistic understanding, when read according to a spiritual philosophy, may become parts which even corroborate one another.

How strangely and often, figures of speech have become

disfigurements of facts ! And how often, also, an earnest man has been reduced to mere rationalism in theology, because of the manner in which "the things of the Spirit" have been argued, as though they were material monuments, and properly the subjects of arithmetic, geometry and mere logic !

The age of Jesus Christ — that day of the Lord was not exactly like yesterday, though yet to-day, there are means, by which critically and historically, it is to be known of, as it was. The resurrection of Jesus is not a mere incident in history ; because it is infinitely connected. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." That "new sepulchre wherein was never man yet laid," was about to become the birth-place, as to manifestation of "the Lord from heaven." And that same place, when left vacant by the resurrection of Jesus, was about to become the cenotaph of mere Judaism.

When Jesus was transfigured on the mount, it was because of the Spirit ; and through the Spirit it was, that the apostles saw him, and Moses and Elias with him. And it was because of the Spirit, that there was "heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

A voice from heaven had just borne him witness ; when Jesus said to his hearers, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die." Oh wonderful age and day of the Lord ! A day which in vision, Abraham had desired to see, and also had seen ! And yet too, it was a day, as to which, fourteen hundred years later than Abraham, it was doubtful, prophetically, how people would be able to endure it on its coming ! And what a time indeed that time was ! And indeed otherwise than wonderful, how could that age have been, wherein he was living, through whose death, the human race was to be born again !

"Now Herod the tetrarch, heard of all that was done by him : and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead ; and of some, that Elias had appeared ; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again. And Herod said, John have I beheaded

but who is this, of whom I hear such things?" Herod was a Sadducee, probably, and yet with his ears, a little open, for hearing.

Astonishing times they were! as indeed well they might have been, while destiny as to Jerusalem was making itself sure; and while the prophets seemed to be calling out aloud and afresh their old predictions, and while those events were occurring, of which the four gospels were to be the long-enduring records. The promise to Abraham was about being fulfilled; and what anciently was but a germ of destiny, was about to become full-orbed, and to rise upon the nations spiritually, as the sun of righteousness with healing in its wings. A wonderful age it was; for it was the greatest age as to crisis in history, which has ever been. It was an age, as to the full manifestation of which, imperial Rome was but a servant for making ready highways for its great news, or at best, but an unquestionable, though unconscious witness, as to the keeping of the sepulchre, in and from out of which Jesus rose again. Plato and Æschylus, and also Aristotle — what has their worth been, in comparison with the language which they used, and through which Greece was but like an intelligent secretary, for helping apostles and others, to publish their histories, epistles, and visions, in the best manner possible, for the best intellects of the age.

It was under heaven, and on the earth, "the fullness of the time" more completely than Paul himself perhaps ever thought, and in ways, of which it is conceivable, that hereafter science will have much to say, as to the conditions which concurred, telluric, magnetic and celestial, and also as to something psychologically, by which human nature may itself have been ripened for fresh conditions of growth. Let the wisdom of Egypt have been all which can possibly be claimed for it; and let the wise men of the East have been informed ever so mysteriously, yet, as a fact, historically, was not there once familiarly named in the cottages of Galilee, and current in the streets of Jerusalem, a name, which has proved itself, up to this time, to have been above every other name? And therefore that age may well be credited for

having been what Paul claimed for it, as "the dispensation of the fullness of time," and thereby also, under heaven, as the concentration of all those forces, by which human beings live and move and are lifted up.

When Jesus cried out, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets!" he was at a point, both as to time and place, where the general effect of Jewish history was becoming manifest, as to the law which was given by Moses, and as to the long rebelliousness, which was punished by the captivity in Babylon; as to what Samuel and Saul had been in regard to one another; and as to what David had sung, and what so very differently he had sometimes done; also as to Solomon so wise and so foolish; and as to the time in which Ahab and Elijah knew of one another; and as to the ages respectively of the prophets from Isaiah to Malachi.

The world was at the beginning of a new era, which was to date from Jesus of Nazareth, as he was popularly called, but yet, "the world knew him not." For indeed, at that time, it was a crisis of that nature, and so great, as that what is light to one, is darkness to a thousand. And indeed otherwise than from that reason how could there have been "killed the Prince of life." And indeed that Prince himself said as to the people of his time, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

When heaven draws nigh to earth, it is with a light, which is blinding darkness for some persons, while yet for others it is like what angels might emerge from. Heaven draws nigh to earth for quickening. And with quickening they are the latent faculties of men, which specially are made remarkable. And it is with remembering that the spiritual atmosphere, at the beginning of our era, would seem to have been intensified, that many of its incidents become intelligible, such as the revival of prophecy, and the incursion of unclean spirits. A day of the Lord is a time, in which men spiritually are under pressure, for the better if they are good, and for the worse if they are bad. And such a time was that, wherein were included the life, crucifixion, death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

And even as it was as to Jesus Christ, that on being "put to death in the flesh" he was "quickened by the Spirit," so also there were those as witnesses, who were raised as to their latent spiritual faculties, and which were those by which they saw and heard him; and so also there were others more numerous still than they, who felt, spiritually, as to Jesus and death that "It was not possible that he should be holden of it."

The resurrection of Jesus was the manifestation of a crisis as to mankind, under heaven; and it is not to be understood, at all, apart from time and place, and a belief in the Spirit.

In regard to the resurrection of Jesus, many of the objections as to belief in it, originate in such a state of mind as what would say this, "Anatomists and chemists standing round, let a dead body, on a table, get up and talk, and then perhaps men will believe." And the brothers of the people who talk thus would say, "Seeing is believing; and as we did not see, we do not believe." But what is Supreme in the Universe would seem to be careless of human pettiness, at its grandest, and even sometimes to have "chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise."

The resurrection of Jesus was the greatest fact of a great age, and it was the culmination of the greatest earthly crisis under heaven, and as to the significance of which, not Jerusalem only, but Egypt and Assyria, and Greece and Rome, and all time, also, by the way of prophecy, were concurrent.

In the Gospel of Matthew, it is written, as to Pilate, while Jesus was on his trial before him that "when he was set down on the judgment-seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him." A sign of the times this was, and as to what the atmosphere was, spiritually. Pilate's wife had this experience. And so strange it is, that it has been so little noticed. The prediction of his Lord as to Peter, that he would deny him thrice in one short night, is accounted as having been wonderful because of the manner of its fulfillment; and surely so it was. But this dream of Pilate's wife is evidence as to what the state was of what

may be called the atmosphere, spiritually, in Jerusalem, at that time. And of like proof, is the opinion of Caiaphas as to the expediency of killing Jesus, which "spake he not of himself; but being high priest that year he prophesied, that Jesus should die for that nation."

As to the picture of the crucifixion, which the gospels give, how many wonderful lines there are, which could never have been drawn except from life! And also they are lines, which are self-sufficient, as to evidence, for a critical understanding! For a man with "ears to hear" that incident is as true as truth itself, as to what the thieves said to one another as they hung on their separate crosses, and as to what Jesus replied to one of them. Such words, at such a time, and from such lips! "And Jesus said unto him, Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." This paradise was certainly not heaven, because even after his resurrection, Jesus said to Mary, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father." The state, into which Jesus passed after his death as a mortal, was that apparently, wherein, on his entrance, he "preached unto the spirits in prison." That place or state therefore of paradise was probably one of hopefulness. And on this understanding, these words of Jesus to the penitent thief, are intelligible and also infinitely tender.

As to the time, during which Jesus was dying on the cross, it is written, "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour." And by another evangelist, it is said that "the sun was darkened." According to usage as to language, it is not necessary to suppose that there was an eclipse of the sun, either natural or supernatural. Nor yet fairly ought the historian to be considered as being held by his words to meaning anything more than a preternatural darkness in perhaps the region round Jerusalem. As to whether that darkness was noticed in Rome, or experienced by Caractacus in Britain, is simply a superfluous question.

It has been sometimes supposed that this darkness was an effect in nature occasioned by her conscious sympathy with the sight of the crucifixion. But that of course is mere senti-

mentalism. There are some illustrations, which might be adduced on this subject, which would be abundantly credible to some persons, but which yet cannot be pleaded here, without an argument, which would be a book in itself.

That darkness was probably not a special but an accompanying miracle. It was simply an incident in connection with the death of Jesus; and what was miraculous in it, was because of that miracle of organization which Jesus Christ himself was. And probably that strange darkness round Golgotha, was because of the greatness of that soul, which mortally was connected with nature, and which by that connection was in agony and dying. With every breath, which any man draws, the air about is changed and impoverished.

Nor is man connected with the air, merely as concerns oxygen and nitrogen, but by electricity and magnetism, and also probably by other ways, which are unknown. And so it is readily conceivable, that in some manner, the forces of nature may have been unbalanced and darkened, whilst the soul of Jesus Christ was loosening itself from all connection with them. And as to this supposition, there are some things analogous, historically and psychologically, of which some great minds have been well persuaded.

The thought of there being any possible connection between a tempest and an earthquake, was once accounted superstitious, but at present it is scientific. That by pestilence, there could be an obscuration of the atmosphere, was once supposed to be merely a fancy, but now it is an ascertained fact. And like what immediately precedes, let also what follows be mentioned for what it may be worth. Several times in history, as to men who had been like the right arm of direction for their times, it is recorded that on dying, the atmosphere about them seemed to signify itself by darkness or by tempest. And now let it be remembered that by a spiritual philosophy, which is not likely to become extinct, Christ Jesus was the "one mediator between God and men." And then the darkening, which there was round about, at the time of his crucifixion, will not seem so strange as necessarily to be incredible; nor yet so anomalous, but that even sci-

ence may be expected, sometime to demonstrate the manner of it.

"Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And behold the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." In the temple, there were two veils, but the one, which was specially "the veil" must have been the second veil, behind which was "the tabernacle which is called the holiest of all ; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant ; and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy-seat." These things were memorials of the past, as to the Spirit. And they were also signs of what the Jewish people had been to God, as "a peculiar people." And the tearing of the veil before them, was emblematic that thenceforth "the things of the Spirit" were open to all persons, who should, anywhere, ever be quickened by the Spirit. And it was the work perhaps of "the angel of the covenant." And it was done, probably, as a preparation of the minds of men, against the day of Pentecost, and what ensued upon it.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

As little children, when they see a heap of beautiful and sweet roses lying upon a table before them, and their mother goes and puts them in a mortar, and therein beats them all to pieces, the children cry out, and think the mother spoils them, though she does it merely to make a conserve of them, that they may be more useful and durable : thus it is that that we think we have comforts like beds of roses ; yet, when God takes them from us, and breaks them all to pieces, we are apt to conceive that they are all spoiled and destroyed, and that we are utterly undone by it : whereas God intends it to work for our greater benefit and advantage. — *John Spencer.*

IMPRESSIONS OF CUBA.

II.

A CUBAN COFFEE PLANTATION.

THIS lovely spot (one of the gardens of Cuba) is about three leagues from Havana, and two from Marianao, the fashionable watering-place, where the Havanese have many fine country-seats. The captain-general passes the hot season at Marianao, and the aristocracy of course follow. The waters of this place are exceedingly pure, and the only sort of water which is safe to drink in Havana. Carts full of kegs containing water from this source go to the city every morning to supply the citizens, at twenty-five cents a keg. Strangers, not *au fait*, drink at the hotels the hydrant water, which is often dangerous, causing terrible gastric fevers.

This part of the country is elevated, and one of the coolest spots on the island, as also the most salubrious, being "tierra colorada" (red earth), which is considered as the freshest and most healthful.

Here, all the summer months, it is rarely too warm for comfort, while in the city reigns the most fearful heat; and I think nowhere could a pleasanter climate be found at all seasons of the year. It is as agreeable here at the hot season as at any Northern watering-place; and one feels surprised to find in Cuba these summer resorts, where cool breezes ever blow, and the nights are often cool enough for a blanket.

These coffee plantations are the most beautiful of tropical agriculture, — not that the coffee-plant is in itself of much interest, this is but an insignificant shrub, which thrives only in shady retreats; but, where this plant is grown, one finds every variety of choice fruit and rare trees from all quarters of the globe.

These orchards or parks being on a vast scale, one is lost among the numerous avenues of trees, the view presenting

an endless garden of the most beautiful foliage; for none equals the tropical fruit-tree in this as in the fragrance of its flower.

At this season (June 14), nature is in her most blooming state, the rains having set in to refresh vegetation; for in the spring and winter months, there is not a drop of rain for months together, and, but for the heavy dews, nothing could grow.

The frequent showers in summer render this tropical clime pleasant which otherwise would be unendurable.

THE SPLENDID FLORA.

On seeing these rich gardens, I felt that Paradise may be found again on earth when this island throws off the Spanish yoke, and comes into better hands; and this I am assured is the heartfelt wish of every Cuban. On coming in sight of this cafetal, my eye was attracted by the aerial appearance of some lofty trees which lined the main avenue. This, I am told, is the pine-tree of China, the most graceful of trees.

Here, also, the *palma real* adorns the roads and gardens; and the *cana brava* grows enormously high, with its lofty plumes waving above, forming an impenetrable shade. Groves of orange and plantain predominate, above which rise more lofty trees, such as the mango, bread-fruit, cocoanut, *caimeto*, *alligator pear*, *maranon*, *sapodillo*, tamarind, with many others, ornamental and fruit, forming a luxurious landscape.

The mansion on the cafetal, being on an elevated spot, commands a fine view of the country around.

The largest tree in Cuba is the gigantic *ceiba*, which is without a rival for beauty and size. This is the "matchless" tree, rightly so named, in Lord Morpeth's incomparable description of the scenery of Cuba.

"Ye tropic forests of unfading green,
Where the palm tapers, and the orange glows;
Where the light bamboo weaves her feathery screen,
And her far shade the matchless *ceiba* throws.

Ye cloudless ethers of unchanging blue,
Save where the rosy streaks of eve give way
To the clear sapphire of your midnight hue,
The burnished azure of your perfect day!"

There, is in Havana an old *ceiba* where Columbus, it is said, had the first mass celebrated on landing on the island. This tree is falling to pieces from age, but still bears some pods of silk cotton, which is gathered and preserved with great reverence. This silk cotton, if put into a pillow, it is believed, is a certain cure for headache.

THE COUNTRY HOUSES.

Most country houses here are of but one story. This is on account of the hurricanes which are frequent and terrible. They are built of solid stone, floor and roof being of brick tiles when not of marblé.

The thick walls keep out the heat of the sun, while a verandah all round the house affords at all times shelter from sun and rain.

The large saloon at this cafetal is some fifty feet square, the bedrooms on either side. The most agreeable part of this house is the fine verandah, which is one hundred and twenty feet in length, each side, and twenty feet wide. Here we sit all day enjoying a beautiful nature. The bedrooms are rather confined and inconvenient; but Cubans do not seem to care much about comfort in this, living so much out in the open air, which doubtless is the reason they have such good health. This is an old-fashioned country mansion, and with the lower story which is commodious, with lofty ceiling, might be made an elegant residence. These lower rooms are used for threshing and storing the coffee. A mill for this purpose is set in the midst, which is open on two sides, supported by arches. Tendals, which are extensive floors of mason work for drying the coffee, are on all sides. Around these are planted flowers and ornamental shrubs. Plants from all lands are here collected, and thrive well in this balmy clime.

From hence branch out numerous avenues of every variety of tree, and one is soon lost in a Cretan labyrinth, and may walk miles before finding the way home. The numerous out-buildings around give the place the appearance of a thriving village.

This would be a delightful residence all the year ; but the family, like all wealthy Cubans, reside nearly always in Havana.

THE SLAVES.

The sight of the slaves at work is painful ; and indeed it is sad to see and know the *régime* pursued with them. At early dawn, while yet dark, they are aroused by the large bell, which has a sound to awake the dead. They work until 11 o'clock, A.M., when they have a recess of two hours to get breakfast. From 1 o'clock till dark, they work again, when they come home, each with a bundle of guinea-grass on the head to feed the animals. I saw, in a gang, several slaves newly imported from Africa. They were in fetters for running away. They are tall, well-formed men, docile in character. One Creole negro was also working in chains for having stabbed a companion in a fit of jealousy. In our walk one evening, we came unexpectedly on the gang at work, when this latter rushed out, throwing himself on his knees before us, appealing to the ladies to intercede for him. He uttered the word *perdono*, calling at the same time the names of two infants who were with us, knowing by this he would touch the hearts of their mothers. To see this poor fellow, with difficulty bending his knees with these clanking chains, was touching enough ; and with his invocation to God for the little ones, we could not restrain our tears. The ladies spoke kindly to him, promising to try and have him released.

The Cubans, as a general thing, are a humane people, with generous hearts. Though brought up luxuriously, and accustomed all their lives to slaves, they are against the institution, and desire a general emancipation. They give many of their slaves freedom, and then pay them high wages. These servants prefer to remain always with their former masters. An

ounce of gold per month is the price for any kind of servant. Those who are considered clever in any particular branch of service gain from \$25.00 to \$34.00 in gold. A nurse always has \$34.00, and many valuable presents given her.

THE CUBAN'S LOVE OF THE UNITED STATES.

The Cubans prefer speaking English, and have their children taught this in preference to other idioms; for, being great admirers of the United States and her institutions, their great hope has been, for many years, to become one of the Union.

Strange as it may appear, their sympathies are with the North. This was the case, especially at the time of the rebellion, while the Spaniards and Spanish government gave every aid and encouragement to the secessionists. Nothing would be more welcome to the Cubans than to see a Northern fleet in their waters to free them from the Spanish yoke, and abolish slavery in the island. Little or nothing is known of the Cuban feeling in the United States. There is a strong party in favor of emancipation of the slave here, and this among the wealthiest slaveholders and the educated class of the community.

OPPOSED BY THE SPANIARD.

They meet with every opposition from government, whose interest it is to continue the slave-trade, and slavery of both African and Cuban. I think, were the true state of things known to the Northern people, something had long since been done for Cuba.

Only very lately has any measure been taken to put an end to the slave-trade. Spaniards come here to enrich themselves by traffic in negro blood, which, though well known, has been winked at by government, for it shares largely in the profits. It is a fact, well known here as in Spain, that their honest men do not like to come to Cuba as officials. All coming in this capacity are regarded as robbers, by the Cubans as by their own countrymen. Gen. Dulce is the exception. He, having done much for this people, has made himself re-

spected. His removal is lamented ; and he received every mark of esteem on his departure from this people, which none other has done. He put an end to a slave traffic here which had been carried on, unknown to him, for some years by a Spanish millionaire, who in a few years has amassed a very large fortune here by this trade. He possessed a small island where he had his slaves landed on arriving from Africa ; kept them on this isolated place until they acquired sufficient Spanish, that it might not be suspected, when they were brought to the Havana market, that they were fresh from Africa. What inhumanities have been practiced by this man in that desert islet where he kept his myrmidons to execute his mandates unrestricted by any law, who can tell? But how many islets, uninhabited by men, are there not in this vicinity where the institution may be kept up as long as slavery in the island exists?

With all the efforts of the English and United-States government, and the sacrifice of many brave officers on the African coast, the slave-trade will continue as long as there is a market for the negro.

THE CHINESE AND THE COOLIES.

Not only the negro, but now the unfortunate Chinese and Coolie are kidnaped, and imported here to be sold in a slavery not much better than that of the negro ; and daily do these unfortunates run away and destroy themselves. When captured, they undergo the same punishments as the negroes. Many throw themselves under the trains on the railway as a means of escape from misery. The importation of the Asiatic is much encouraged by government, for the tax on this people is very great. The slaves also captured by government on their way to this market are sold for the benefit of these officials ; so they have every interest to encourage the slave-trade. The emigration of white and free labor is much desired by the Cubans ; but this the government does everything to prevent, causing endless difficulties and annoyances to such emigrants with their numerous passports and papers requisite for permission to remain on the island.

THE MONTH.

THE INDEX. We have been very much interested in the first number, which is all that we have seen, of this thorough-going journal. It takes its stand outside of Christianity, declaring, with the utmost truth, that "the Christian name, whatever else it may include, necessarily includes faith in Jesus as the Christ of God. Any other use of the name is an abuse of it, and the Christian confession under some interpretation or other, is the boundary line of Christianity." Indeed, the editor by his definition of religion, to the increase of which he proposes to devote this weekly paper, seems to place himself outside of anything and everything which we have been accustomed to regard as religious, in distinction from the moral or ethical; for he begins his "Fifty Affirmations" thus: "Religion is the effort of man to perfect himself." Now we know those who earnestly commend and prosecute this endeavor after the best, without entertaining any faith in God or immortality; nay, in express antagonism to such faith as obsolete and superstitious. Certainly it is not according to common usage to give the name "religion" to such efforts. When we are told in Scripture, that "pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep one's self unspotted from the world, it is to be noticed that the word rendered "religion" would be more exactly rendered "ceremonial," the way of expressing one's religion; and the writer supposes that it is to be manifested "before God the Father." If Mr. Abbot finds encouragement to go on, we shall have a free-religionism which a plain man can understand, and which will be understood to be rejected, as altogether unsatisfactory. "The prayer of Ajax was for light." Let us have light. We get it from Mr. Abbot. In some of his statements we find ourselves heartily at one with him. In this, for example, he seems to us to be altogether right: "It is customary amongst

Unitarians to extol the purity of primitive Christianity, and to bewail what they call its 'theological' and 'ecclesiastical' corruption during the first three centuries. This is to praise the blossom at the expense of the fruit, — to indulge in that idealization of childhood which is practical depreciation of manhood." We have never been able to make out the humanitarianism of the early Christians; certainly it is not the doctrine of books so old as the "Revelation" or the Epistles to the Corinthians. We cannot, however, agree with Mr. Abbot that the Romish hierarchy is the logical evolution of "primitive Christianity." Mr. Abbot maintains that "the Messianic idea is the great tap-root of Christianity;" his reasons for this opinion seem to us wholly unsatisfactory. We owe Christianity, according to this view, to "a magnificent mistake; we are living to-day upon the fruits of the Messianic ambition of Jesus." That the Messianic idea was one of the providential preparations for Christianity, we make no doubt; it was one of the instruments which the Divine Spirit laid hold upon for the great work of reconciliation. "How it happened," writes Mr. Abbot, "that he first became convinced of his own divine election to the throne of 'the kingdom of heaven' will never, I think, be explained; that is a secret buried with him. But that he did become convinced of it, and that this profound conviction, rather than any desire of personal aggrandizement, was the root of his Messianic claims, seems to me the simple verdict of justice." Why not take the New Testament and universal Christian explanation of the admitted fact? Is it then impossible for God to make choice of one, by whom to draw near to his children? and for one so chosen to know it? "To reconcile his supreme self-emphasis with his supreme self-sacrifice is the great perplexing problem of the Gospels." What better solution can we have of it than the Saviour's "I and my Father are one?" "There is but one ambition sublimer than [that of Christianity] TO REIGN BY SERVING, and that is TO SERVE WITHOUT REIGNING. I cannot shut my eyes to the nobler purpose; I cannot forget that Socrates both lived and died to make it real." Socrates then surpassed Christ. Suppose the servant is the king and cannot be

less, the king's own and only son at all events, how can he serve without reigning, and does not the fact that he comes to serve, though he be a king, add infinitely to the significance of his serving? Can we not say now and feel, Our King is not only above us, commanding our obedience, — he is within us, sharing our burden? We commend the following to those who have not yet decided between Theism and Christianity: —

“CHRISTIANITY HISTORICALLY DEFINED. — Viewed, then, as one of the world's great historical faiths, Christianity is religion as taught in the New Testament, illustrated in the history of the Christian church, and based on faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ of God.

“If we attempt to make Christianity independent of its founder, and of the only records we possess of his life and teachings (an attempt sometimes made by modern radical thinkers), we simply abandon the historical ground altogether, identify Christianity with religion, and annihilate the specific difference between Christianity and all other historical faiths. It thereby becomes impossible to distinguish it from them on the same level; we resolve it into ‘natural religion,’ and must treat all other religions as merely various modifications of it. I need not say how arbitrary and irrational this seems to me. If Christianity is itself ‘natural religion,’ — only love to God and love to man, — how can we escape calling Brahminism and Buddhism and Confucianism, and the rest, *different forms of Christianity*? Would there be nothing absurd in that? If, on the other hand, we say that religion is always natural, and that Christianity, Brahminism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism, Mohammedanism, and so forth, are all diverse historical forms of this one natural religion, I think we take the only sensible ground. We then put all historical faiths on the same level, and can distinguish them one from another by their different historical characters. But to do this is at once to sweep away all the fine-spun metaphysical, transcendental, and purely ethical definitions of Christianity, in order to make room for its only historical definition, namely, religion as taught in the New Testament, illustrated in the history of

the Christian church, and based on faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ of God.

"THE UNIVERSAL ELEMENT IN CHRISTIANITY. — The ethical and spiritual teachings of the New Testament are not peculiar to it; as is well known, they can all be paralleled in other ancient writings. These, therefore, will not help us to comprehend that which is peculiar to Christianity and makes it a distinct historical religion; they belong to the universal religion of man, appear in the sacred books of all religions, and are the private property of none. In accordance with the true historical method, therefore, I shall pass by these universal truths which find perhaps their best expression in the New Testament, in order to concentrate our attention on the fundamental characteristic of Christianity, namely, its faith in the Christ. It is this which separates it from all other religions, constitutes its prime peculiarity, and serves as foundation to the other leading doctrines of Christian theology. Purity, benevolence, mercy, forgiveness, humility, self-sacrifice, love, and so forth, are nowhere more beautifully taught than in the discourses, conversations, and parables of Jesus; but these make the universal, not the special, element in the New Testament, — these make its religion, not its Christianity, — and it is now its Christianity that we seek to comprehend.

"THE SPECIAL ELEMENT IN CHRISTIANITY. — So far as our present object is concerned, we need not be embarrassed by the doubts resting over the authorship, the dates, and the historic credibility of the various books of the New Testament. No critical scholar of the present day regards the Gospels as wholly mythical. Yet, unless they are wholly mythical, it is impossible to doubt that Jesus did actually claim to be the Christ or Messiah, that is, the founder and sovereign of 'the kingdom of heaven.' So all-pervading is this claim, that to eliminate it from the Gospels is to reduce them at once to unadulterated myth. If misunderstood on this point, there is no reason to suppose that Jesus has been understood on any point; if his reported sayings on this subject are un genuine,

there is no reason to suppose any of his sayings to be genuine."

Very refreshing is this distinctness as to "THE CHRISTIAN NAME."

"However some may yearn, having lost all faith in the Messianic idea, to retain nevertheless the Christian name, whether from love for its venerable associations, or from reluctance to bear the odium of its distinct rejection, I believe that the proprieties of language, and increasing perception of what consistency requires, will slowly wean them from this desire. The world at large can never be made to understand what is meant by a Christian who in no sense has faith in the Christ. If Jesus really claimed to be the Christ, — if he made this claim the basis of the Christian religion, — and if through this claim he still infuses into his church all its Christian life, — then the world is right, and may well marvel at a Christianity that denies the Lord, yet wears his livery. For myself, I cannot evade the practical consequences of my thought. The central doctrine of Christianity is for me no longer true; its essential spirit and faith are no longer the highest or the best; and with the reality I resign the name."

And very vague and shadowy, regarded as a RELIGION, is this upon the "THE HIGHER FAITH."

"If, then, there is a higher faith than Christianity, he who shall cherish it is bound to make known what it is, and how it is higher than Christianity. Bear with me while I endeavor to discharge this duty. It is no easy thing to do. Free religion, the higher faith I hold, has no history, save the history of the human spirit, striving to work out its destiny in freedom. It is spiritual, not historical, — universal, not special, — inward, not outward. It has no list of doctrines to teach, no church to extend, no rites to perform, no Bible to expound, no Christ to obey. With none of these things, it is the soul's deep resolve to love the truth, to learn the truth, and to live the truth, uncoerced and free. It is intellect daring to think, unawed by public opinion. It is conscience daring to assert a higher law, in face of a corrupted society and a conforming church. It is will setting at naught the world's tyrannies,

and putting into action the private whispers of the still, small voice. It is heart resting in the universal and changeless law as eternal and transcendent love. It is the soul of man asserting its own superiority to all its own creations, burning with deep devotion to the true and just and pure, and identifying its every wish with the perfect order of the universe. It is neither affirmation nor negation of the established, but rather a deep consciousness that all the established is inferior to that which has established it. It is the spirit of self-conscious freedom, aiming evermore at the best, and trusting itself as the architect of character. In fine, it is that sense of spiritual unity with boundless being which fills the soul with reverence for human nature, and disables it from worshipping aught but the formless, indwelling, and omnipresent One."

—RELIGION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS. We recur to this subject, partly because it is so much before the community, and partly to set down a word with reference to an article in the "Christian Register" in which the views of the present writer upon the matter are criticized. After quoting opinions to the same purport from Rev. Mr. Ware and Rev. Mr. Beecher, the article continues:—

"But finally, and most decidedly, by Mr. Ellis, in the 'Monthly Religious Magazine,' 'There is neither justice nor expediency nor safety for our schools, nor peace, save in the recognition of the broad principle, that in the week-day schools the education is to be secular and simply moral; whilst religion, in all its forms, must be left for parents, Sunday teachers, and pastors.'

"I will not stop now to notice the impression which these last-quoted words would naturally produce upon a teacher (like myself), of an unconscious feeling of self-sufficiency on the part of the clergyman, bidding, as it were, the school-master stick to his calling. But this I say, that the utterance of such sentiments, by such men, shows plainly a want of familiarity with the subject of which they speak. Their reminiscences afford the data for their judgment."

Now we desire expressly to disclaim any feeling of self-

sufficiency as to this work. If there is anything we are conscious of, touching the matter of education in religion, it is *insufficiency*. We are painfully aware that the task is a very delicate and a very difficult one. There is none that we do not enter upon more courageously. We are continually tempted to pronounce it impossible for us. We try, after a poor way, to superintend our Sunday school, to take the place of an absent teacher, to study with a Bible class ; but we are free to confess that our school would be a wretched failure save for the help of some very competent and very zealous teachers. Thankfully would we welcome aid from every quarter, and only hesitate to ask our public school or private school teachers to come and help, from a feeling that they need more than others a day of rest. It is too serious and formidable an undertaking this of transmitting our faiths to the new generation, that one should be concerned as to the class of workers who shall be permitted to engage in it. Moreover, we are glad to know that there has been any improvement in the dispensation of religion in our schools. A member of school committees in country and town until very lately, the improvement has not come to our notice. Of course, just so far as the teachers are genuinely religious, there will be an improvement ; if Christianity is what we believe it to be, and what it ought to be, a considerable portion of school instructors will be Christians in spirit, and of course the atmosphere of the school will be Christian. But, taking the world as we find it, the hazards of formality in school devotions will be very great, and such exercises will not be conspicuous amongst means of grace. Undoubtedly, however, in some cases, as in the one referred to by the writer in the "Register," the exclusion of religious services and instructions from the public schools, by which we mean, of course, the schools that are sustained at the public cost, will be attended with very serious loss ; nevertheless, we must not, for the sake of avoiding this loss, imperil our public-school system. Just as the crew of a war-ship clear the decks for battle, or the crew of a merchantman make all right and tight for a blow, so we must put the public-school

system in trim, and resolutely spare all that is not essential to it in order to go into the conflict for the very life of the institution, which is even at our doors. The Romanist wants something more than the exclusion of the Bible. When that is gone he will tell you that he likes the schools even less than before, because now they are altogether godless. He does not want a secular school. He wants a parochial school. He wants a system of education which is directed by priests, — history, science, as taught by priests. Now we do not find fault with *him* for wanting such schools, and for demanding that the public-school money shall be distributed amongst the numberless religionists to support such schools. But we do say that we of America, and of the nineteenth century, do *not* want and will not have any such institutions, to be maintained at the public cost ; that they belong to a civilization older and less perfect than ours ; that we mean to have the public school open for all, without any distinction of sect or color, or degree, and especially for those who should have a plain, practical education, industrial as well as intellectual. And to this end we must jealously, and, as it may seem, too scrupulously, provide against even the appearance of what may seem evil in the public school to any religionists, and we are almost ready to add, non-religionists, save those who would be excluded by the definition quoted on another page of this record for the month, and put forth in "The Index," — "Religion is the effort of man to perfect himself." The Romanist shall not say, "You read the Protestant version of the Bible, colored by Protestant doctrine ; you use text-books prepared by third-class writers, who, in an ignorant or bigoted spirit, repeat exposed slanders against the Romish Church : " the Jew shall not say, "You put with my Bible another book in which I do not believe." There shall be nothing which any person, who would be accounted by our laws a good citizen, can complain of as against his religious convictions. The State has no religion beyond the broadest possible theism, as recognized in the imposition of oaths and the like. It has no Christianity to teach. A large number of the citizens are at least, in name, Christians ; but all the citizens are not, and

they can exercise all the offices of citizenship without being Christians. In the more advanced stages of education it would be impossible to maintain this secularism, *but the higher schools and colleges ought not to be sustained at the public cost*; taxation for such institutions is unjust, though the injustice may not be recognized.

Now all this is mainly important, first, that we may not be deprived of our public school, or be persuaded to have anything to do, as a State, with any kind of parochial school, Protestant or Catholic or Positivist; for we have had, and shall have, Positivists, who claim to be the religionists of religionists; and, second, that, not trusting to what can help us very little, if at all, we press upon the home and the church the duty of imparting solid, clear, thorough instruction in the great truths and facts of the Christian religion. It is the business of Christians to make Christians, and through their proper religious instrumentalities. If they need a portion of the school time they ought to have it. We have often wished that we could keep our children at home just enough longer in the morning to have the family prayers without unseemly haste, and a sense of being on time. We have often wished that the Monday lessons did not encroach upon the Sunday, and that we might not be so often told, when we are desirous of saving the child from a total ignorance of the contents of Bible, "I cannot learn that, for my studies are very hard for every day of the week." The new generation, *orthodox and heterodox*, is profoundly ignorant of Christianity. They receive very little instruction in religion which would be called instruction in anything else. The churches are open once a week for worship and preaching which take Christianity for granted, and so far pass it on from generation to generation; six days in the week the costly edifice is closed, and only mutely symbolizes Christianity. The Sunday school ought to be made a thousand times more systematic and efficient than it is when it is at its best. We ought not to be afraid to ask children to learn an easy lesson; we ought to be sure that they come for something besides a second-rate or first-rate story book; we ought to try in all ways to increase the

number of those who, believing in Christ, shall so speak of him to the children that they will not drop their Christianity when they come of age, in this time of so much questioning, as a childish prejudice. We must bestir ourselves in this work! What are the churches and Sunday schools for if not for this? The State has no Christianity, or none to speak of, but the *home* has, or some homes, at least; Christians must be Christians indeed, so Christian that they can be known as such without any superscription, and they must be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them, and not too much at ease, or too confident of the strength of their cause to do it; they must gather into Sunday schools, if none else, then those who have no religious instruction at home; they must keep alive Christian tradition and Christian experience; and the schools of states that do not make the confession of any form of Christianity a condition of citizenship, cannot help them. Let Christians, through their proper instrumentalities, make Christians of those who are to be taught and of those who are to teach in the public school, and so secure the spirit where the letter may not claim a place. We can hardly imagine that the most determined Romanist or the most thorough-going *philosophe* could find it in their hearts to object to the service in the school, which the writer in the "Register" so beautifully describes. Such a service must be full of grace and sweet benediction. And yet, as we must repeat, we cannot regard such work as other than exceptional, and with one who can advance in this way the cause of pure religion must be content to accept a multitude of teachers, whose week-day labors must be supplemented by a positive and pronounced Christianity which the home and church alone can supply.

—REV. WILLIAM H. CHANNING AND MR. WENDELL PHILIPS BEFORE THE RADICAL CLUB must have been refreshing to hear. Mr. Channing has had some experience in the way of advanced thinking, and it is a significant fact that he has never been able to conquer his prejudices in favor of Christianity, but still holds it to be the fountain of life for the world. Col. Higginson dissented; but it is none the less

true, though he does not know it, that he owes his own faithful and brave living, not to Epictetus but to Christ. He cannot live from one man; but do we not all live from God through the one Mediator between God and man?

— OLD SOUTH LECTURES. There are to be lectures in defence of the Gospel, as well as in criticism of it, and the list of lecturers embraces the names of many who will be heard with the utmost interest and respect. The movement is very timely, and will be attended with the best results.

— IMPROVEMENT OF SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHINGS. The meetings which are held for this purpose at the rooms of the Young Men's Christian Union, as advertised in the "Christian Register," deserve the attention of teachers. The Sunday school is as yet only in its infancy.

THE poet, describing the manifold miseries of Æneas, that Trojan prince, in his long and weary voyage, sheweth the great peril that he and his company were in, and the great speed they made to escape the danger of the cruel Cyclops, who, together with his gigantic army mustered on the shore, as strong as so many sturdy oaks, and tall as lofty cedars, whose very countenances threatened death and destruction to all that came near them. It was then no time for them to stay there, but high time to hoist up the sails, nimbly to betake themselves to their oars, and rather than the giants should offer violence to them, to lay violent hands on their tackle, and so quit a dangerous coast that could promise nothing but mischief. So the only way that we have to prevent any imminent danger, which by our sins we draw upon our heads daily, and such as are even at the shore ready to assault us; nay, such as have already even boarded these our poor little barks of mortality, is swiftly to sail away in the waters of unfeigned repentance, and every man of us to betake himself speedily to the oars of true contrition and invocation to Almighty God, and to row painfully in the sea of our sinful hearts, seeking and never giving over, till we are upon the rock of our defense, and have found the God of our salvation. — *John Spencer.* *

RANDOM READINGS.

MRS. STOWE AND LADY BYRON.

Mrs. Stowe's "Vindication" is written with much vigor; and her womanly indignation for the heartless and calumnious bearing towards Lady Byron of the English press, and especially the "Blackwood Magazine," is perfectly just. It should have the response of a hearty amen from the American public. Byron—one of the worst characters in all literature—has been lauded and canonized; and because he hated his wife, and made her the subject of ribald jeers in his poetry, she has been followed with misrepresentation,—been denied the seclusion which she sought, and even the quiet rest of the grave. Mrs. Stowe was perfectly right in vindicating the character and the memory of her friend,—one of the best and loveliest characters which can be found in the range of female biography. Whatever we may think of the last unnatural crime charged against Lord Byron, his wife stands amply justified; and, not only so, she is proved to have shown a spirit of forbearance, forgiveness, and tenderness, rarely to be met with in this world.

Touching the unnatural crime now alleged, we think the final verdict must be,—*not proved*. The proof thus far disclosed rests solely on the testimony or confession of Byron himself; very poor testimony, especially when abusing himself, and charging himself with something monstrous, and under the peculiar circumstances doubly liable to impeachment, because he had a special end to gain by it. The proof looks plausible enough in Mrs. Stowe's narrative, but it will not bear sifting. There was a deep below the deeps in Byron's nature which his wife seems never to have fathomed. She is not to be blamed for that, but praised rather. We doubt whether any woman so transparently good and true, and with a purity almost infantile, could have fathomed it.

The story thus far shows this, that Byron's marriage on his part was thoroughly mercenary; that it was solely for the purpose of keeping himself from the clutch of bailiffs, and to get means for his spendthrift profligacy; that he never loved his wife, and finally

hated her; that he never meant to live with her, but only to get hold of her property; that he meant to treat her so badly, and make himself appear so odious, that she should hate him as he hated her, and finally leave him of her own accord. In order to do this he made himself appear to her after marriage as bad as he possibly could. And when his brutality failed to drive her from him, he avowed himself guilty of incest, and justified it. Cain practiced it, — why not Byron? The supposed crime was not discovered as one artfully concealed. The semblance or pretense of it was ostentatiously paraded before his wife, and forced upon her notice. How does this agree with his having fainted once before for fear of detection? He meant his wife should believe it, and he meant the public should not believe it. That she finally took him at his word, and did believe it, is not strange. It would have been strange if she had not. Yet, looking at the whole story, it is highly improbable, while the avowal and parade of it suits exactly the character of Byron, and fits into that abominable system of dissimulation by which he won his wife even to a dramatic fainting for love, and then sought to make her desert him by a pretense of unnatural and satanic depravity.

Mrs. Stowe's argument, that he shrank from a legal investigation, proves nothing as to the main charge. He knew well enough that his conduct, this charge aside, was so bad, that, if brought out in the blaze of a public trial, it would expose him to the execration of the world.

Mrs. Stowe's book, while it fails to prove the main charge against Lord Byron, yet shows the depraving influences on manners and literature during the first quarter of the present century. That a genius of such baleful lustre should hold its place for a whole generation, and appear like a star of the first magnitude, confusing the brain not only of girls and women, but of the first literary men of the times, like Scott, Wilson, Hogg, and Moore, is one of the curiosities of English literature. The world certainly moves. Byron's works will be read as illustrations of the morbid anatomy of the human heart; but it is not conceivable that the moral sense of a whole generation can be thus bewildered again.

What new evidence may be among the papers left with the heirs of Lady Byron, who keep silent, nobody knows. It is to be hoped for the honor of human nature that nothing worse is to come.

UNITARIANS AND UNIVERSALISTS.

What is the difference between them in point of belief? is a question which seems to puzzle sorely some of our neighbors. It was once very clearly answered in a tract of the Unitarian Association, which we have not at hand. But the answer may be clearly and briefly stated. The answer is twofold: Universalists without exception believe in the final redemption and happiness of the whole human race. Unitarians believe this *generally*, but with exceptions, so that the belief does not characterize them as a denomination.

Universalists believe it as a *doctrine of revelation*, and so they put it forward and preach it as a dogma. Their whole exegesis of the Bible is shaped by it, and made to conform to it.

Unitarians do not believe it as a doctrine of revelation fairly yielded by the interpretation of Scripture. This we mean is the average opinion. They do not think the Bible gives any verdict as to the final salvation of all mankind. It reveals clearly the issues of this life in the life proximate beyond the grave; but what lies beyond *that* in the abyss of eternity, touching the incorrigibly wicked, they do not think has been a matter of disclosure in any written revelation. But from the nature of God and the nature of man, and the laws of Divine Providence, and the aspirations of all truly regenerate souls, the idea of endless punishment looks incredible, and from such data they believe there is rational hope for the restoration of the human race to final happiness and glory. But from the nature of the case they must hold it not as a dogma of revelation, but as a belief wrought from the prayers and reasonings of the individual soul. So that while the Universalist puts it forward as one of the doctrines of Christianity, the Unitarian cherishes it as one of the glorious hopes of humanity. The Universalist preaches it as the word of God. The Unitarian holds it as the hope of man. In one case it is a matter of denominational creed; in the other, of individual opinion and aspiration. In the one case it is the public proclamation of God; in the other it is the deduction of private reason.

On the Bible question some Free Religionists agree with the orthodox. The Bible teaches the endless misery of a part of the race. But the Free Religionists asserts this to discredit the Bible, and destroy its authority. The Unitarian thinks there were reasons for the Divine reserve in this matter. When the disclosure comes, as it may perhaps when the world is prepared to receive it without

abusing it, it will not depend on a balancing of doubtful texts, but come in noonday effulgence from the face of God.

1869

Is a year, says Prof. Yeomans, that will be noted in history for three things bearing auspiciously upon human progress. These are the completion of the Pacific Railroad, the completion of the Suez Canal, thus girdling the globe with a direct line of communication, and the discovery of heat in starbeams, this last being done by delicate and ingenious experiments of Dr. Huggins. "The Scientific American" says that a system of telegraphing to the nearest star is no more impossible now than the submarine cable would have appeared to the men of science fifty years ago.

SHARP CRITICISM.

The late Prof. Alexander of Princeton Seminary, whose biography has just been published, was a man of profound scholarship, broad common sense, and withal a very keen critic, and intolerant of nonsense. A young divinity student gave a discourse highly sensational on the destruction of Sodom. It fell to the Professor to criticise it, which he did in this summary way: "The discourse consists of two parts,—that which everybody knew, and that which nobody knew; and I do not think that under either head Mr. D. has added to the stock of our knowledge."

It would be fearful to apply this rule of criticism universally, as it would shorten the generality of sermons at least one-half. It would shorten magazine articles, too, amazingly.

"GOOD HEALTH."

This monthly abounds in good things which ought to become familiar in every household. The January number has an article on longevity containing curious facts and practical suggestions. It tells of two men, "old Parr and Jenkins," who lived past one hundred and fifty years, showing what are the possibilities of the human organism. Old Jenkins must have been a curious relic. Had he lived in our age, he might have done valiant service in all the wars of the continent, from the old French war of 1755 down to the rebellion of 1860, and told their history. Jenkins was once summoned into court to prove a right of way. The judge cautioned

him, "Beware how you swear ; for there are two men in court each above eighty, who have both sworn that they know no such right of way."

"Those men are mere boys," said Jenkins.

The judge turned to the eighty-year-old boys : "How old do you take this Jenkins to be?"

"Don't know ; he was a very old man when we were children."

Haller industriously collects one thousand one hundred and thirteen instances of persons who lived past one hundred years ; sixty-two who lived past one hundred and ten ; twenty-nine from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and thirty ; fifteen from one hundred and thirty to one hundred and forty ; five from one hundred and forty to one hundred and fifty ; two from one hundred and fifty upward.

Hufeland revises and extends the law of animal life as Buffon had given it. Buffon puts it, "Animal life, including that of man, is by nature five times as long as that of animal growth. Man's period of growth is twenty years ; so his natural term of life is one hundred years." Hufeland puts it, "Man's period of growth is twenty-five years, and he should live naturally eight times that period,—two hundred years." So he says, "We may with the greatest probability assert that the organization and vital powers of man are able to support a duration of activity of two hundred years." Old Parr and Jenkins serve as examples to illustrate the law.

This is encouraging ; but see what we come to by hereditary taint, Adam's fall, and bad ways of living. Notwithstanding the natural law illustrated by old Parr and Jenkins, our chances of long life dwindle amazingly. Out of every hundred born fifty die before ten ; twenty between ten and twenty ; ten between twenty and thirty ; six between thirty and forty ; five between forty and fifty ; three between fifty and sixty. Out of the original one hundred then, only six stand a fair chance of living beyond sixty years. If you are sixty years old, you may consider yourself a veteran, having run the gauntlet through all the enemies of life that have gloomed each side of your path,—consumptions, fevers, pleurisies, accidents, and plagues,—which have cut down ninety-four of the comrades you started with, and left you only as one of six solitary men. When you started in the race of life, you plunged into dangers more thick than those of the famous six hundred,— "cannon to right of them, cannon to left of them, cannon in front of them." So, if you are

sixty, be prepared to die rejoicing in the mercy of God, who has singled you out from ninety-four other persons, and appointed you to a longer mission to serve and glorify him on the earth.

TALL PEOPLE.

"Good Health" says again that neither the very big nor the very small people are usually long-lived. Very tall people have not so good a chance as those of medium height. One reason is, "they are apt to acquire a habit of stooping, whereby the vital organs are compressed." We fear some people not tall are in the same danger, judging from the slant and curved figures we meet in Washington Street. So, if you mean to live long, stand up straight, and see that there is no weakness in the back-bone. Moral health and physical both depend on this. Do not go ducking your head at every obstacle, but move perpendicularly in the race of life, and your chances are better for being among the six elect of the Lord at the end of the race.

REMARKABLE SELF-DENIAL.

Rev. B. F. Clark's book, "Mirthfulness and its Exciters," has this very good story, which points a moral for boarding-houses:—

"A clerical principal of an Episcopal boarding school for boys called his pupils together at the beginning of Lent, and gave them a short lecture upon self-denial and self-sacrifice, and advised them to select some article of food with which they would dispense during the season of Lent. The boys were directed to go into a room by themselves, and, after deciding what luxury they would give up, to return to the chapel and report their decision. The boys retired, and soon returned and made the following report:—

"*Respected Principal*,—I have the honor to report that your pupils have religiously considered the subject submitted to them by your reverence, and have unanimously voted to dispense with *hash* during Lent."

FORMALISM.

The same book has also this anecdote of a certain minister which points a moral of another kind. The minister had a parishioner who used profane language. He went to him with reproof and remonstrance. The man heard him attentively, and replied,—

"Well, I *do* swear a good deal, and you pray a good deal; but neither of us mean anything by it."

"TO THE COLOR."

"The Liberal Christian" of late gives no uncertain sound, while its trumpet waxes louder and louder, and speaks to the condition of the churches. In an article of Dr. Stebbins' comes this rousing appeal:—

"We must not commence by denominational suicide; we must not erase our name, and the bright names of our fathers, from our banner; we must not cease as individuals to believe something, or, at least, to affirm something, lest we be called bigots and exclusionists, and thus deny the Lord that bought us. Not thus shall we scale the heights and view the world. No, brethren, no; not thus will victories be won for truth and God. We must inscribe on our banner the integrity of the gospel history, the supreme authority of Christ's teaching in all matters pertaining to his religion, and our solemn vow to maintain, spread, and cherish that religion as taught by him, with all the ardor of love, all the strength of faith, all the persistency of life. If any one cannot accept Jesus as Master and Lord, very well. Let him go his own way and work his own work in peace. We cannot work together in the spread of the Christian religion, that is certain. We should only paralyze each other's endeavors by the very attempt.

"'To the color,' then. Let us once more attempt to organize on distinctly, emphatically announced Christian basis. Let our trumpet give no uncertain sound. Let us not deceive ourselves with the vain dream that numbers, not unity, give strength; that we have gained a victory when we have surrendered our convictions; that we are doing a glorious work when we are only sweating over laying the foundations of our own tomb.

"Let a meeting be called of those churches which have neither become ashamed of the name Unitarian nor of the Christian religion as taught by Jesus Christ, and let us organize for Christian work as we Unitarians understand Christian work, as being something more than furnishing food and raiment and shelter, as being the spread also of the teachings of Christ, and the re-enforcement of his gospel as the supreme Christian law."

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE MONTHLY REVIEW AND RELIGIOUS
MAGAZINE.

In reply to your suggestion that I would occasionally furnish you with something illustrative of the work of the American Unitarian Association, I send you the following letters which are just received. The first describes the work of our mission under Miss Bradley, in which our people are generally much interested. The other, apart from its own interest, incidentally suggests the extent of the circulation of our books and tracts, and the welcome they receive in widely varied quarters. There are no classes of people in any part of the country from which we are not continually having assurances of their value.

Truly Yours,

CHARLES LOWE.

Wilmington, Jan. 6, 1870.

REV. MR. LOWE.

Dear Sir:—I am about to submit to you a report of the work in the Wilmington mission for the three months ending Jan. 1, 1870.

The school opened on Oct. 11, 1869, with five teachers and a number of scholars averaging about fifty to a teacher.

However, there were daily applications to enter, and, as we refused none who came, we found that different arrangements must be made. So Miss Bradley sent North for a third teacher for the Hemenway School, which has at the present time one hundred and fifty scholars on its roll, and is in a fine condition, being in charge of Miss Bradley's niece, who is an accomplished scholar, having also for her assistants two ladies who work admirably with her.

But an extra teacher was not all that was required in our Union School, for there was not room in the building for the number which crowded its walls, and Miss Bradley accordingly planned a building which should connect with the Grammar Schoolhouse, and be called a Normal School. She advised with some gentlemen of this city, who gladly helped her in her undertaking, giving her the lumber and attending to the erection of the building.

The work was soon completed, and, in the last week in November, the first division of the Grammar School, comprising two classes

and numbering fifty, was formed into a Normal Division, with Miss Claribel Gerrish as their teacher, and also Principal of the Grammar School. My classes took the vacant seats of the first division, and Miss Rush's division took the place of my former classes, and Miss Frost of this city was engaged as teacher of the Primary Division.

Thus we have four divisions and four distinct rooms, opening into each other, where we can have any general exercise without one of the two hundred and twenty children rising from their seats.

The Normal Room is cheerful and bright, with flowers in the windows; and just now all of the rooms are trimmed with the evergreens (so peculiarly beautiful in this part of the country) with which we adorned them at Christmas, when we had a joyful Christmas-tree, thanks to our kind friends at the North who sent us the wherewithal to make every child in our charge a bountiful present.

I wish that you might come in and see the schools, and you would realize more fully the extensive work Miss Bradley has done here, and which must be given up this year.

It is not from the lack of success of these schools that the people do not take them at once, and establish them as a permanency. On the contrary, they were never more popular than now, and they are patronized by many who scorned them formerly. They hold their place, but every one affirms that they will die the moment Miss B. relinquishes them. The State is bankrupt, and the money apportioned by the State for Public Schools utterly insufficient to keep them more than three months in the year. No Northern teacher will come here for that time. No Southern teacher is adequate.

But the aspect is not hopeless, even if they are given up. Miss B. has shown the State that Free Schools in the South can be, and are, a success. She has given them a living example of what Free Schools should be, besides lifting a community of poor people, and teaching their children in a way which will influence their whole lives. The schools were never so well graded as now, or capable of more rapid advancement. The children are all enthusiastic, and we anticipate much work from them this year.

Miss Bradley's Sabbath school continues to be a most hopeful and interesting feature in her work here. She has in her Bible-class at times over fifty adults, who listen in the most earnest manner to her scriptural explanations, and even join in the exercises, showing some depth of thought which she has awakened in them. Many of

the people of the city come to see her Sabbath school, and consider it quite wonderful that she draws so many into her service.

The people are poorer as a whole than they were last year. The fall has been severe, and chills and fevers prevail. I am sure there is more suffering than last year; but these people never complain, and your own judgment would tell you what they would never say. Such poverty I never thought possible, until I saw these people, and it is enough to keep one from complaining through his whole life to go about among them and see how they live.

S. S. Ashley, Superintendent of Education for the State of North Carolina, says, in an endorsement to an appeal for the Peabody Fund, "I am confident that Miss Bradley's schools have not only been of great benefit to the city of Wilmington, but have paved the way for the introduction and establishment of the State Public School System."

Richmond, Va., Jan. 6, 1870.

BOSTON UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION:—

The package of "tracts" arrived to-day. I have looked them over carefully, and find they are *just what we need* for the Penitentiary convicts, and will be heartily welcomed by many a poor colored person outside the walls to whom such a treat rarely comes. I saw the Superintendent of the Penitentiary yesterday. The books you had forwarded through William H. Read were received, and are now in their library for the use of the prisoners; yet with those there we need such reading as "tracts,"—something that they can read or have read to them in a short time,—for many are poor readers, while others cannot read at all, and these have no time nor inclination for large books.

Notwithstanding the opposition to progress here in Virginia, the whipping-post and shackles in the Virginia Penitentiary have given place to the Bible and Sunday school. Two years ago only from twenty-five to thirty-five convicts were allowed to assemble at any one time in the chapel, and then only under guard of four men, armed with *muskets* and *revolvers*! Now, over six hundred men and women (convicts) assemble for morning and afternoon services, with no guard nor arms inside the inner walls!

The last day of the old year the Superintendent announced that there would be a "watch-meeting" at the chapel to watch the old year out and the new year in. The citizens waited upon Gen. Canby and desired him to stop the Penitentiary praying-and-preach-

ing "watch-meeting." Gen. Canby sent a messenger to Mr. Wardwell, saying, "Proceed." At about 8 o'clock we met in the parlor of the Superintendent and enjoyed an hour of prayer and praise ; then we adjourned to the chapel with the convicts.

Father M—— and Rev. Mr. Gates spoke earnestly and well, and the prisoners sang with evident feeling. At a few moments before 12 o'clock, every prisoner knelt with the guests in silent prayer ; and, as the new year dawned upon us, Father M—— audibly welcomed it, when all arose nearer to the Good Father for our communion with him.

Our small "band" with over six hundred convicts at midnight ! no arms nor guard inside ! no precaution taken except a *double* guard at the *outer gate*, that *citizens whose presence was not desired* might not enter ! I think this is *progression*, if it did transpire in Virginia.

Please accept my thanks for your kindness in forwarding the "tracts," and not only mine, but the thanks of all the inmates of the Penitentiary.

They are in great need of more small hymn books, entitled "The Chapel Hymn Book." Can you tell us where they can be obtained ? They are probably out of print, yet old copies may be found.

Perhaps some of your readers may have copies of "The Chapel Hymn Book" referred to.

THE wheels of the chariot move, but the axle-tree stirs not ; the circumference of the heavens is carried about the earth, but the earth moves not out of its centre ; the sails of a mill move with the wind, but the mill itself stands still : all emblems of contentment ; and thus it is that a Christian is like Noah in the ark, which, though tossed with the waters, he could sit and sing in it, and a soul that is gotten into the ark of contentment sings and sits quietly, and sails above all the waves of trouble ; when it meets with motion and change in the creatures round about on every side, it stirs not, nor is moved out of its place ; when the outward estate moves with the mind of Providence, yet the heart is settled through holy contentment ; and when others like quick-silver shake and tremble through disquiet, the contented spirit can say with David, "O God ! my heart is fixed, my heart is fixed !" (Ps. lvii. 7.) —
John Spencer.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE LIFE, PASSION, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, being an abridged harmony of the Four Gospels in the words of the sacred text, edited by the Rev. Henry Formby, with an entirely new series of engravings on wood, from designs by C. Clasen, D. Mosler, and others. New York: The Catholic Publication Society.

Our Catholic neighbors succeed admirably in adapting their publications to the wants, tastes, and capacities of the classes to which they are addressed. This book is just what its title indicates, and, though not finely artistic, will be a very attractive book to the devout millions of Roman Catholic readers. It has seven large plates, and seventy-seven historical vignettes, and a map of Palestine. It is in handsome binding, beautifully gilt. The wood-cuts are cheaply done; but the cheapness will bring them within the reach of multitudes who will be better instructed by their pictorial illustrations than by any historical narrative. Protestants who have Catholic servants will find this a good book to present to them. s.

The same firm publish CHRIST AND THE CHURCH in a handsome octavo of 344 pp., it being a course of lectures delivered in St. Ann's Church, New York, during the season of Lent in 1869, by the Rev. Thomas Preston. It contains the usual arguments for the Roman Church as the only true one, with one lecture devoted to the refutation of Protestantism. The lectures are well written, and will confirm Catholics in their convictions, while with intelligent Protestants they will seem like a begging of the whole question. s.

LADY BYRON VINDICATED. A history of the Byron controversy from its beginning in 1816 to the present time. By Harriet Beecher Stowe. Boston: Fields, Osgood, & Co.

Mrs. Stowe's vindication of her own motives in this and her former publication, and of the motives and character of Lady Byron, we consider ample and complete. The same can hardly be said of Mrs. Stowe's judgment and discretion. That she reports faithfully the conversation with Lady Byron, that the latter believed

the crime of incest had been committed, and had reason for believing it, every candid reader must allow. Whether it *had* been committed, looking at the matter on all sides, and sifting the whole evidence, is another question. We do *not* believe it. s.

LETTER AND SPIRIT, Winchester Lectures, by Richard Metcalf, is a small volume of 186 pp., being a clear, concise statement of the generally received Unitarian articles of faith. Mr. Metcalf calls his book the "Letter" because he thinks it the literal meaning of what Jesus taught eighteen hundred years ago; and the "Spirit" because he thinks it is what the spirit of God teaches to-day through the spirit of man. Mr. Metcalf always writes with cogency and perspicuity, and these traits are conspicuous in the present volume. s.

THE SCIENCE OF THOUGHT. A System of Logic. By Charles Carroll Everett. Boston: William V. Spencer. 1869.

The word "logic" in this title is misleading to the old-fashioned student, who, perhaps, worried through Whately's treatise, with the help of the late Prof. Channing. If he turns away from the book one ought not to be surprised; for really that stumbling through the Archbishop's expositions of the various syllogisms was not exhilarating, and we all got pretty weary of that everlasting *dictum* which really seemed to be more *de nullo* than *de omni*. But let him not turn away. Prof. Everett deals with realities, and his book is in truth a study in mental, moral, and spiritual philosophy, singularly clear and simple in style, and rich in illustrations. It would be exceedingly valuable in the hands of a competent teacher, as a textbook for high schools and colleges. It is plain that the author has drawn abundant nutriment from Hegel, but it does not appear, as we read his pages, that he accepts the pantheism of that philosopher; on the contrary, comparing him with Schopenhauer, he writes, "Each of these great systems is thus imperfect. The system of Hegel needs the grand motive power of the will; that of Schopenhauer the expansive power of thought." And again, in criticism of Schopenhauer, "His notion of will, as in itself blind and unconscious, he does not find in his own nature. He finds it in the outer world, and from thence brings it into himself. The real process of thought was the opposite of what he described. While he claims to be explaining the outer world from the inner nature of man, he is really explaining the inner nature of man by the outer world." To many a

confused, misty thinker, or rather dreamer, this volume may be commended as a precious "Aids to Reflection," after a truer and far more useful sort than even the interesting volume of Coleridge which bears this name. E.

METRICAL PIECES. Translated and Original. By N. L. Frothingham. Part Second. Boston: Roberts Brothers. 1870.

This book of poems is scarcely published, but goes forth in a more private way to one and another friend of the author, a most welcome and valued gift, and yet bringing a very tender sorrow for the burden which presses so heavily upon him in these last years. Many of the translations from the German were made after the light which had ever been to him so peculiarly sweet shone for his guidance no longer. It is very pleasant to have one so genial and friendly come back to us even so. But the poetry has great merit of its own, and we always numbered the pieces in this collection—and they were not few—which, through the kindness of the author, found their way into our magazine amongst our most valued contributions, and our readers were altogether of our mind. E.

ESSAYS ON THE SUPERNATURAL ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY, with Special Reference to the Theories of Renan, Strauss, and the Tübingen School. By George S. Fisher, D.D., Professor of Church History in Yale College. New and Enlarged Edition. New York: Charles Scribner & Co., No. 564 Broadway. 1870.

We have already heartily commended this work as it came before us in the first edition, and we have time only to say, as we go to press with the additions under our eyes, that the new matter brings the volume fully abreast with the religious times. It is simply common fairness for those who are so much in the habit of treating Christianity as antiquated to read this carefully and conscientiously prepared work. Let them strike, but read. Let them at least understand what they are denying. Ignorant denial is surely no improvement upon ignorant affirmation. We are glad to know that Prof. Fisher is to be one of the lecturers in the Thursday evening course at the Old South Chapel, a form of instruction that we are sorely in need of. E.

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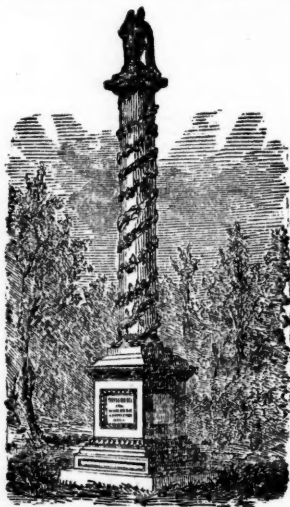
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